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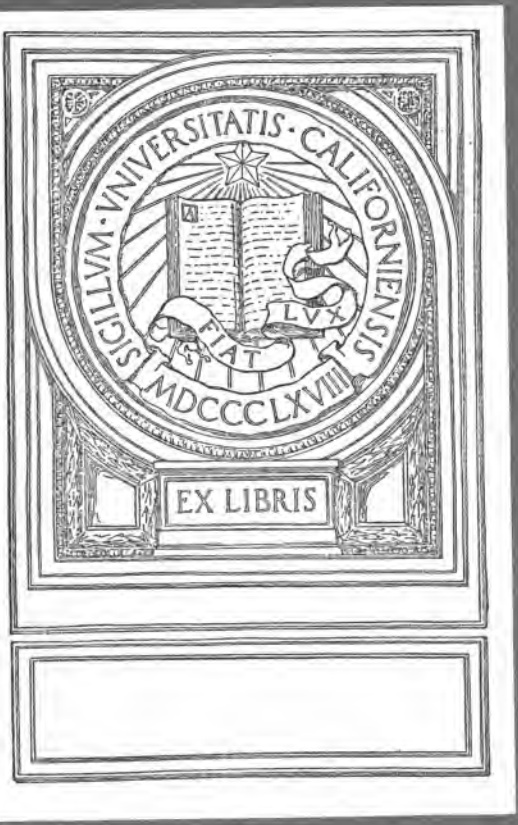
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"But to come back to our Physician; truly, my lord, I must needs pay him, as a due, the acknowledging his pious discourses to be excellent and pathetical ones, containing worthy motives to incite one to virtue, and to deter one from vice; thereby to gain heaven, and to avoid hell. Assuredly he is owner of a solid head, and of a strong, generous heart."

Sir Kenelm Digby.

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MAIN

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

In preparing this volume of the Miscellaneous Works of Sir Thomas Browne, the Editor has endeavoured to include in it what are generally esteemed the best productions of that extraordinary writer. At the head of these stand unquestionably the "Religio Medici," and the "Hydriotaphia"; which pieces, as well as the "Letter to a Friend on the Death of his Intimate Friend," are published without omission or variation.

The Notes appended to the "Religio Medici," are, for the most part, selected from the Annotations, first published in 1654, the author of which is unknown. With much that is valuable in these Annotations is blended not a little that is irrelevant and superfluous. For the anonymous Annotator has the fault, common to all his tribe, of gliding over the dark and diffi-

24770

cult places with a most provoking blindness or indifference, whilst he encumbers with erudite explanation those passages that are as clear as the noon-day. In the "Observations" upon the same work, by Sir Kenelm Digby, the Editor could find nothing worth transferring to these pages.

A few pages at the close of the volume have been filled up with miscellaneous selections from various parts of the "Enquiries into Vulgar and Common Errors," which may serve to give the reader some idea of that singular work. It is to be wished that there was sufficient taste in the community for such writings to authorize the reprinting of the whole of this book, with such supplemental and emendatory notes as the progress of physical science since the time of Browne, has made necessary.

ALEXANDER YOUNG.

BOSTON, NOVEMBER 25, 1831.

CONTENTS.

Page

Life of Sir Thomas Browne ix

Preface to Religio Medici 2

Religio Medici; — The Religion of a Physician . 7

Remarks on the Hydriotaphia 151

Dedication 157

Hydriotaphia; — Urn-Burial, or a Discourse of the Sepulchral Urns lately found in Norfolk . . 163

A Letter to a Friend on the Death of his Intimate Friend 233

Pseudodoxia Epidemica; — or Enquiries into very many Received Tenets and commonly Presumed Truths.

Adam's Error 271

Of Adherence unto Antiquity 273

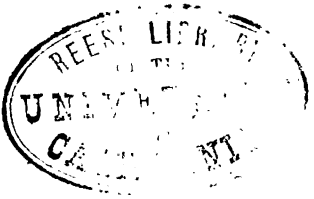
The Erroneous Disposition of the People . . 275

Of the Falling of Salt 285

Of Breaking the Egg-Shell 286

Of the True Lover's Knot 287

Of the Cheek Burning or Ear Tingling . . . 287
Of Speaking under the Rose 288
Of Smoke following the Fair 289
Of Sitting Cross-legged 290
Of the Paring of Nails 290
Of Hair upon Moles 291
Of Lions' Heads upon Spouts 291
Of the Picture of God 292
Of the Sun, Moon, and Winds 294
Of the Sun Dancing 294
Of the Devil 295
Of Spots on the Nails 296
Of Lights Burning Blue 298
Of the Wearing of Coral 298
Of the Divining Rod 299
Of Discovering Matters by Book or Staff . . 300
Of Authority 302
Of Gardens 303
Of Light 303
Of Order 304
Of Sleep 304



SOME ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.*

Sir Thomas Browne was born at London on the nineteenth of October, 1605. His father was a merchant, of an ancient family at Upton in Cheshire. Of his childhood or youth there is little known, except that he lost his father very early, that he was defrauded by one of his guardians, and that he was placed for his education at the school of Winchester.

His mother, having taken three thousand pounds as the third part of her husband's property, left her son, by consequence, six thousand, a large fortune at that time for a man destined to learning. But it happened to him, as to many others, to be made poorer by opulence; for his mother soon married Sir Thomas Dutton, probably by the inducement of her

* The following Memoir is an abstract of Dr. Johnson's Life of Browne.

fortune; and he was left to the rapacity of his guardian, deprived now of both his parents, and therefore helpless and unprotected.

He was removed in the beginning of the year 1623 from Winchester to Oxford, and entered a gentleman-commoner of Broadgate-Hall, which was soon afterwards endowed, and took the name of Pembroke College, from the earl of Pembroke, then chancellor of the University. He was admitted to the degree of bachelor of arts, January 31, 1626–7, being, as Wood remarks, the first man of eminence graduated from the new college.

Having afterwards taken his degree of master of arts, he turned his studies to physic, and practised it for some time in Oxfordshire: but soon afterwards, either induced by curiosity or invited by promises, he quitted his settlement, and accompanied his father-in-law, who had some employment in Ireland, in a visitation of the forts and castles, which the state of Ireland then made necessary.

He that has once prevailed on himself to break his connexions of acquaintance, and begin a wandering life, very easily continues it. Ireland had, at that time, very little to offer to the observation of a man of letters. He therefore passed into France and Italy; made some stay at Montpellier and Padua, which were then the celebrated schools of physic; and, returning home through Holland, procured himself to be created doctor of physic at Leyden.

About the year 1634 he is supposed to have returned to London, and the next year to have written his celebrated treatise, called "Religio Medici,"

"The Religion of a Physician," which he declares himself never to have intended for the press, having composed it only for his own exercise and entertainment. It indeed contains many passages which, relating merely to his own person, can be of no great importance to the public; but when it was written, it happened to him as to others, he was too much pleased with his performance, not to think that it might please others as much. He therefore communicated it to his friends, and receiving, I suppose, that exuberant applause with which every man repays the grant of perusing a manuscript, he was not very diligent to obstruct his own praise by recalling his papers, but suffered them to wander from hand to hand, till at last, without his own consent, they were, in 1642, given to a printer.

The "Religio Medici" was no sooner published than it excited the attention of the public, by the novelty of paradoxes, the dignity of sentiment, the quick succession of images, the multitude of abstruse allusions, the subtlety of disquisition, and the strength of language.

What is much read will be much criticized. The earl of Dorset recommended this book to the perusal of Sir Kenelm Digby,* who returned his judgment

* "Sir Kenelm Digby," says Lord Clarendon, "was a person very eminent and notorious throughout the whole course of his life from his cradle to his grave, — a man of very extraordinary person and presence, which drew the eyes of all men upon him; of a fair reputation in arms; in a word, possessing all the advantages that nature and art could give him."

upon it, not in a letter, but a book; in which, though mingled with some positions fabulous and uncertain, there are acute remarks, just censures, and profound speculations; yet its principal claim to admiration is, that it was written in twenty-four hours, of which part was spent in procuring Browne's book, and part in reading it.

The success of this performance was such as might naturally encourage the author to new undertakings. A gentleman of Cambridge, whose name was Merryweather, turned it not inelegantly into Latin; and from his version it was again translated into Italian, German, Dutch, and French; and at Strasburg the Latin translation was published with large notes, by Lenuus Nicholas Molifarius. Of the English Annotations, which in all the editions from 1644 accompany the book, the author is unknown.

The peculiarities of this book raised the author, as is usual, many admirers and many enemies; but we know not of more than one professed answer, written under the title of "Medicus Medicatus," by Alexander Ross, which was universally neglected by the world.

At the time when this book was published, Dr. Browne resided at Norwich, where he had settled in 1636, by the persuasion of Dr. Lushington, his tutor, who was then rector of Barnham Westgate in the neighbourhood. It is recorded by Wood, that his practice was very extensive, and that many patients resorted to him. In 1637 he was incorporated doctor of physic in Oxford.

He married, in 1641, Mrs. Mileham, of a good family in Norfolk; "a lady," says Whitefoot, "of such symmetrical proportion to her worthy husband, both in the graces of her body and mind, that they seemed to come together by a kind of natural magnetism."

This marriage could not but draw the raillery of contemporary wits * upon a man who had just been wishing in his new book, "that we might procreate like trees, without conjunction"; and had lately declared, that "the whole world was made for man, but only the twelfth part of man for woman"; and that "man is the whole world, but woman only the rib or crooked part of man." †

Whether the lady had been yet informed of these contemptuous positions, or whether she was pleased with the conquest of so formidable a rebel, and considered it as a double triumph to attract so much merit and overcome so powerful prejudices; or whether like most others, she married upon mingled motives, between convenience and inclination; she had, however, no reason to repent, for she lived happily with him one and forty years, and bore him ten children, of whom one son and three daughters outlived their parents. She survived him two years, and passed her widowhood in plenty, if not in opulence.

Browne having now entered the world as an author, and experienced the delights of praise and molestations of censure, probably found his dread of the

* Howel's Letters. † Religio Medici.

public eye diminished, and therefore was not long before he trusted his name to the critics a second time; for in 1646 he printed "Enquiries into Vulgar and Common Errors"; a work, which, as it arose not from fancy and invention, but from observation and books, and contained not a single discourse of one continued tenor, of which the latter part arose from the former, but an enumeration of many unconnected particulars, must have been the collection of years, and the effect of a design early formed and long pursued, to which his remarks had been continually referred, and which arose gradually to its present bulk by the daily aggregation of new particles of knowledge. It is indeed to be wished, that he had longer delayed the publication, and added what the remaining part of his life might have furnished. The thirty-six years which he spent afterwards in study and experience, would doubtless have made large additions to an "Enquiry into Vulgar Errors." He published, in 1673, the sixth edition, with some improvements; but I think rather with explication of what he had already written, than any new heads of disquisition. But with the work, such as the author, whether hindered from continuing it by eagerness of praise or weariness of labor, thought fit to give, we must be content, and remember, that in all sublunary things there is something to be wished which we must wish in vain.

This book, like his former, was received with great applause, was answered by Alexander Ross, and translated into Dutch and German, and not many years ago into French.

Notwithstanding his zeal to detect old errors, he seems not very easy to admit new positions; for he never mentions the motion of the earth but with contempt and ridicule, though the opinion which admits it was then growing popular, and was surely plausible even before it was confirmed by later observations.

The reputation of Browne encouraged some low writer to publish, under his name, a book called "Nature's Cabinet Unlocked," translated, according to Wood, from the Physics of Magirus; of which Browne took care to clear himself, by modestly advertising, that "if any man had been benefited by it, he was not so ambitious as to challenge the honor thereof, as having no hand in that work."

In 1658 the discovery of some ancient urns in Norfolk gave him occasion to write "Hydriotaphia, Urn-burial, or a Discourse of Sepulchral Urns," in which he treats with his usual learning on the funeral rites of the ancient nations, exhibits their various treatment of the dead, and examines the substances found in his Norfolcian urns. There is, perhaps, none of his works which better exemplifies his reading or memory. It is scarcely to be imagined, how many particulars he has amassed together in a treatise which seems to have been occasionally written, and for which, therefore, no materials could have been previously collected.

To his treatise on Urn-burial was added "The Garden of Cyrus, or the Quincuncial, Lozenge, or Net-work Plantations of the Ancients, artificially, naturally, mystically, considered." This discourse he

begins with the sacred garden in which the first man was placed, and deduces the practice of horticulture from the earliest accounts of antiquity to the time of the Persian Cyrus, the first man whom we actually know to have planted a quincunx; which, however, our author is inclined to believe of longer date, and not only discovers it in the description of the hanging gardens of Babylon, but seems willing to believe and to persuade his reader, that it was practised by the feeders on vegetables before the flood.

In the prosecution of this sport of fancy, he considers every production of art and nature in which he could find any decussation or approaches to the form of a quincunx; and as a man once resolved upon ideal discoveries seldom searches long in vain, he finds his favorite figure in almost every thing, whether natural or invented, ancient or modern, rude or artificial, sacred and civil; so that a reader, not watchful against the power of his infusions, would imagine that decussation was the great business of the world, and that nature and art had no other purpose than to exemplify and imitate a quincunx.

To show the excellence of this figure he enumerates all its properties, and finds it in almost every thing of use or pleasure; and to show how readily he supplies what he cannot find, one instance may be sufficient. "Though therein," says he, "we meet not with right angles, yet every rhombus containing four angles equal unto two right, it virtually contains two right in every one."

The fanciful sports of great minds are never without some advantage to knowledge. Browne has interspersed many curious observations on the form of plants and the laws of vegetation, and appears to have been a very accurate observer of the modes of germination, and to have watched with great nicety the evolution of the parts of plants from their seminal principles.

He is then naturally led to treat of the number Five, and finds that by this number many things are circumscribed; that there are five kinds of vegetable productions, five sections of a cone, five orders of architecture, and five acts of a play. And observing that five was the ancient conjugal or wedding number, he proceeds to a speculation which we shall give in his own words: "The ancient numerists made out the conjugal number by two and three, the first parity and imparity, the active and passive digits, the material and formal principles in generative societies."

These are all the tracts which he published. But many papers were found in his closet. "Some of them," says Whitefoot, "designed for the press, were often transcribed and corrected by his own hand, after the fashion of great and curious writers."

Of these, two collections have been published; one by Dr. Tenison, the other in 1722 by a nameless editor. Whether the one or the other selected those pieces which the author would have preferred, cannot be known; but they have both the merit of giving to mankind what was too valuable to be suppressed, and what might, without their interposition,

have perhaps perished among other innumerable labors of learned men, or have been burnt in a scarcity of fuel like the papers of Peirescius.

The first of these posthumous treatises contains "Observations upon several Plants mentioned in Scripture." These remarks, though they do not immediately either rectify the faith or refine the morals of the reader, yet are by no means to be censured as superfluous niceties or useless speculations; for they often show some propriety of description, or elegance of allusion, utterly undiscoverable to readers not skilled in Oriental botany; and are often of more important use, as they remove some difficulty from narratives or some obscurity from precepts.

The next is, "Of Garlands, and Coronary or Garland Plants"; a subject merely of learned curiosity, without any other end than the pleasure of reflecting on ancient customs, or on the industry with which studious men have endeavoured to recover them.

The next is a letter, "Of the Fishes eaten by our Saviour with his Disciples, after his Resurrection from the Dead"; which contains no determinate resolution of the question, what they were, for indeed it cannot be determined. All the information that diligence or learning could supply consists in an enumeration of the fishes produced in the waters of Judea.

Then follow "An Answer to certain Queries relating to Fishes, Birds, Insects"; and a letter "Of Hawks and Falconry, Ancient and Modern"; in the first of which he gives the proper interpretation of some ancient names of animals commonly mistaken,

and in the other has some curious observations on the art of hawking, which he considers as a practice unknown to the ancients.

In two more letters he speaks of the "Cymbals of the Hebrews," but without any satisfactory determination; and of "Ropalic or Gradual Verses," that is, of verses beginning with a word of one syllable, and proceeding by words of which each has a syllable more than the former; as,

"O Deus, æternæ stationis conciliator." AUSONIUS.

and after this manner pursuing the hint, he mentions many other restrained methods of versifying, to which industrious ignorance has sometimes voluntarily subjected itself.

His next attempt is, "On Languages, and particularly the Saxon Tongue." He discourses with great learning, and generally with great justness, of the derivation and changes of languages.

There remain five tracts of this collection yet unmentioned; one, "Of Artificial Hills, Mounts, or Barrows, in England"; in reply to an interrogatory letter of E. D., whom the writers of the Biographia Britannica suppose to be, if rightly printed, W. D. or Sir William Dugdale, one of Browne's correspondents. These are declared by Browne, in concurrence, I think, with all other antiquaries, to be for the most part funeral monuments. He proves, that both the Danes and Saxons buried their men of eminence under piles of earth, "which admitting," says he "neither ornament, epitaph, nor inscription, may, if earthquakes spare them, outlast other monuments;

obelisks have their term, and pyramids will tumble; but these mountainous monuments may stand, and are like to have the same period with the earth."

In the next he answers two geographical questions; one concerning Troas, mentioned in the Acts and Epistles of St. Paul, which he determines to be the city built near the ancient Ilium; and the other concerning the Dead Sea, of which he gives the same account with other writers.

Another letter treats "Of the Answers of the Oracle of Apollo at Delphos, to Crœsus, King of Lydia." In this tract nothing deserves notice, more than that Browne considers the oracles as evidently and indubitably supernatural, and founds all his disquisition upon that postulate. He wonders why the physiologists of old, having such means of instruction, did not inquire into the secrets of nature, but judiciously concludes, that "such questions would probably have been vain; for in matters cognoscible, and formed for our disquisition, our industry must be our oracle, and reason our Apollo."

The pieces that remain are "A Prophecy concerning the Future State of several Nations"; in which Browne plainly discovers his expectation to be the same with that entertained lately with more confidence by Dr. Berkeley, "that America will be the seat of the fifth empire"; and "Museum Clausum, sive Bibliotheca Abscondita"; in which the author amuses himself with imagining the existence of books and curiosities, either never in being or irrecoverably lost.

Some of the pieces above mentioned are of little value, more than as they gratify the mind with the picture of a great scholar, turning his learning into amusement, or show upon how great a variety of inquiries the same mind has been successfully employed.

The other collection of his posthumous pieces, published in octavo, London, 1722, contains "Repertorium: or some Account of the Tombs and Monuments in the Cathedral of Norwich"; where, as Tenison observes, there is not matter proportionate to the skill of the antiquary.

The other pieces are, "Answers to Sir William Dugdale's Inquiries about the Fens; a letter concerning Ireland; another relating to Urns newly discovered; some short strictures on different subjects; and a Letter to a Friend on the Death of his Intimate Friend," published singly by the author's son in 1690.

There is inserted, in the Biographia Britannica, "a letter containing Instructions for the Study of Physic"; which, completes the works of Dr. Browne.

To the Life of this learned man there remains little to be added, but that, in 1665, he was chosen honorary fellow of the College of Physicians, as a man, "virtute et literis ornatissimus;—eminently embellished with literature and virtue," and, in 1671, received at Norwich the honor of knighthood from Charles the Second.

Thus he lived in high reputation, till, in his seventy-sixth year he was seized with a colic, which,

after having tortured him about a week, put an end to his life at Norwich, on his birth-day, October 19, 1682. Some of his last words were expressions of submission to the will of God and fearlessness of death.

He lies buried in the church of St. Peter, Mancroft, in Norwich, with this inscription on a mural monument, placed on the south pillar of the altar:

M. S.
Hic situs est THOMAS BROWNE, M. D.
Et miles.
Anno 1605, Londini natus;
Generosâ familiâ apud Upton
In agro Cestriensi oriundus.
Scholâ primum Wintoniensi, postea
In Coll. Pembr.
Apud Oxonienses bonis literis
Haud leviter imbutus;
In urbe hâc Nordovicensi medicinam
Arte egregiâ et fælici successu professus;
Scriptis quibus tituli, RELIGIO MEDICI
Et PSEUDODOXIA EPIDEMICA aliisque
Per orbem notissimus.
Vir prudentissimus, integerrimus, doctissimus;
Obiit Octob. 19, 1682.
Pie posuit mœstissima conjux
Da. Doroth. Br.

Near the foot of this pillar
Lies Sir Thomas Browne, kt. and doctor in physic,
Author of Religio Medici, and other learned books,
Who practised physic in this city 46 years,
And died Oct. 1682, in the 77 year of his age.

In memory of whom
Dame Dorothy Browne, who had bin his affectionate
Wife 47 years, caused this monument to be
Erected.

Of every great and eminent character, part breaks forth into public view, and part lies hid in domestic privacy. Those qualities, which have been exerted in any known and lasting performances, may, at any distance of time, be traced and estimated; but silent excellencies are soon forgotten; and those minute peculiarities which discriminate every man from all others, if they are not recorded by those whom personal knowledge enables to observe them, are irrecoverably lost.

This mutilation of character must have happened, among many others, to Sir Thomas Browne, had it not been delineated by his friend Mr. Whitefoot, "who esteemed it an especial favor of Providence to have had a particular acquaintance with him for two thirds of his life." Part of his observations we shall therefore copy.

"For a character of his person, his complexion and hair was answerable to his name; his stature was moderate, and habit of body neither fat nor lean, but ἰδιαζοντος.

"In his habit of clothing, he had an aversion to all finery, and affected plainness both in the fashion and ornaments. He ever wore a cloak, or boots, when few others did. He kept himself always very warm, and thought it most safe so to do, though he never loaded himself with such a multitude of garments as Suetonius reports of Augustus, enough to clothe a good family.

"The horizon of his understanding was much larger than the hemisphere of the world. All that was visible in the heavens he comprehended so well, that few that are under them knew so much. He could tell the number of the visible stars in his horizon and call them all by their names that had any; and of the earth he had such a minute and exact geographical knowledge, as if he had been by divine Providence ordained surveyor-general of the whole terrestrial orb, and its products, minerals, plants, and animals. He was so curious a botanist, that, besides the specifical distinctions, he made nice and elaborate observations, equally useful as entertaining.

"His memory, though not so eminent as that of Seneca or Scaliger, was capacious and tenacious, insomuch that he remembered all that was remarkable in any book that he had read, and not only knew all persons again that he had ever seen at any distance of time, but remembered the circumstances of their bodies, and their particular discourses and speeches.

"In the Latin poets he remembered every thing that was acute and pungent. He had read most of the historians, ancient and modern, wherein his observations were singular, nor taken notice of by common readers. He was excellent company when he was at leisure, and expressed more light than heat in the temper of his brain.

"He had no despotical power over his affections and passions (that was a privilege of original perfection, forfeited by the neglect of the use of it), but as

large a political power over them, as any Stoic, or man of his time; whereof he gave so great experiment, that he hath very rarely been known to have been overcome with any of them. The strongest that were found in him, both of the irascible and concupiscible, were under the control of his reason. Of admiration, which is one of them, being the only product either of ignorance or uncommon knowledge, he had more and less than other men, upon the same account of his knowing more than others; so that, though he met with many rarities, he admired them not so much as others do.

"He was never seen to be transported with mirth, or dejected with sadness; always cheerful, but rarely merry, at any sensible rate; seldom heard to break a jest; and, when he did, he would be apt to blush at the levity of it. His gravity was natural, without affectation.

"His modesty was visible in a natural, habitual blush, which was increased upon the least occasion, and oft discovered without any observable cause.

"They that knew no more of him than by the briskness of his writings, found themselves deceived in their expectation, when they came in his company, noting the gravity and sobriety of his aspect and conversation; so free from loquacity or much talkativeness, that he was something difficult to be engaged in any discourse; though when he was so, it was always singular, and never trite or vulgar. Parsimonious in nothing but his time, whereof he made as much improvement with as little loss as any man in it; when he had any to spare from his drudging

practice, he was scarce patient of any diversion from his studies; so impatient of sloth and idleness, that he would say, he could not do nothing.

"Sir Thomas understood most of the European languages; viz. all that are in Hutter's Bible, which he made use of. The Latin and Greek he understood critically. The Oriental languages, which never were vernacular in this part of the world, he thought the use of them would not answer the time and pains of learning them; yet had so great a veneration for the matrix of them, viz. the Hebrew, consecrated to the oracles of God, that he was not content to be totally ignorant of it; though very little of his science is to be found in any books of that primitive language. And though much is said to be written in the derivative idioms of that tongue, especially the Arabic, yet he was satisfied with the translations, wherein he found nothing admirable.

"In his religion he continued in the same mind which he had declared in his first book, written when he was but thirty years old, his 'Religio Medici,' wherein he fully assented to that of the church of England, preferring it before any in the world, as did the learned Grotius. He attended the public service very constantly when he was not withheld by his practice, never missed the sacrament in his parish if he were in town, read the best English sermons he could hear of with liberal applause, and delighted not in controversies. In his last sickness, wherein he continued about a week's time, enduring great pain of the colic, besides a continual fever, with as much patience as hath been seen in any

man, without any pretence of Stoical apathy, animosity, or vanity of not being concerned thereat, or suffering no impeachment of happiness—'Nihil agis, dolor.'

"His patience was founded upon the Christian philosophy and a sound faith of God's providence, and a meek and holy submission thereunto, which he expressed in few words. I visited him near his end, when he had not strength to hear or speak much; the last words which I heard from him were, besides some expressions of dearness, that he did freely submit to the will of God, being without fear. He had often triumphed over the king of terrors in others, and given many repulses in the defence of patients; but when his own turn came, he submitted with a meek, rational, and religious courage.

"He might have made good the old saying of 'Dat Galenus opes,' had he lived in a place that could have afforded it. But his indulgence and liberality to his children, especially in their travels, two of his sons in divers countries, and two of his daughters in France, spent him more than a little. He was liberal in his house-entertainments and in his charity. He left a comfortable but no great estate, both to his lady and children, gained by his own industry.

"Such was his sagacity and knowledge of all history, ancient and modern, and his observations thereupon so singular, that it hath been said by them that knew him best, that if his profession and place of abode would have suited his ability, he would have made an extraordinary man for the privy-council, not

much inferior to the famous Padre Paolo, the late oracle of the Venetian state.

"Though he were no prophet, nor son of a prophet, yet in that faculty which comes nearest it he excelled, i. e. the stochastic, wherein he was seldom mistaken as to future events, as well public as private, but not apt to discover any presages or superstition."

The foregoing character might be confirmed and enlarged by many passages in the "Religio Medici"; in which it appears, from Whitefoot's testimony, that the author, though no very sparing panegyrist of himself, has not exceeded the truth with respect to his attainments or visible qualities.

But it is not on the praises of others, but on his own writings, that he is to depend for the esteem of posterity; of which he will not easily be deprived while learning shall have any reverence among men; for there is no science in which he does not discover some skill, and scarce any kind of knowledge, profane or sacred, abstruse or elegant, which he does not appear to have cultivated with success.

His exuberance of knowledge and plenitude of ideas sometimes obstruct the tendency of his reasoning and the clearness of his decisions. On whatever subject he employed his mind, there started up immediately so many images before him, that he lost one by grasping another. His memory supplied him with so many illustrations, parallel or dependent notions, that he was always starting into collateral considerations. But the spirit and vigor of his pursuit always gives delight; and the reader follows him

without reluctance through his mazes, in themselves flowery and pleasing, and ending at the point originally in view.

"To have great excellencies and great faults, 'magnæ virtutes nec minora vitia,' is the poesy," says our author, "of the best natures." This poesy may be properly applied to the style of Browne. It is vigorous, but rugged; it is learned, but pedantic; it is deep, but obscure; it strikes, but does not please; it commands, but does not allure; his tropes are harsh and his combinations uncouth. He fell into an age in which our language began to lose the stability which it had obtained in the time of Elizabeth, and was considered by every writer as a subject on which he might try his plastic skill, by moulding it according to his own fancy. Milton, in consequence of this encroaching license, began to introduce the Latin idiom; and Browne, though he gave less disturbance to our structures in phraseology, yet poured in a multitude of exotic words, many indeed useful and significant, which, if rejected, must be supplied by circumlocution, such as "commensality," for the state of many living at the same table; but many superfluous, as a "paralogical," for an unreasonable doubt; and some so obscure, that they conceal his meaning rather than explain it, as "arthritical analogies," for parts that serve some animals in the place of joints.

His style is, indeed, a tissue of many languages, a mixture of heterogenous words brought together from distant regions, with terms originally appropriated to one art, and drawn by violence into the

service of another. He must, however, be confessed to have augmented our philosophical diction; and in defence of his uncommon words and expressions, we must consider, that he had uncommon sentiments, and was not content to express in many words that idea for which any language could supply a single term.

But his innovations are sometimes pleasing and his temerities happy. He has many "verba ardentia," forcible expressions, which he would never have found but by venturing to the utmost verge of propriety, and flights which would never have been reached but by one who had very little fear of the shame of falling.

There remains yet an objection against the writings of Browne, more formidable than the animadversions of criticism. There are passages from which some have taken occasion to rank him among deists, and others among atheists. It would be difficult to guess how any such conclusion should be formed, had not experience shown that there are two sorts of men willing to enlarge the catalogue of infidels.

It has been long observed, that an atheist has no just reason for endeavouring conversions; and yet none harass those minds which they can influence, with more importunity of solicitation to adopt their opinions. In proportion as they doubt the truth of their own doctrines, they are desirous to gain the attestation of another understanding; and industriously labor to win a proselyte, and eagerly catch at the

slightest pretence to dignify their sect with a celebrated name.*

The others become friends to infidelity only by unskilful hostility; men of rigid orthodoxy, cautious conversation, and religious asperity. Among these it is too frequently the practice, to make in their heat concessions to atheism, or deism, which their most confident advocates had never dared to claim or to hope. A sally of levity, an idle paradox, an indecent jest, an unseasonable objection, are sufficient, in the opinion of these men, to efface a name from the lists of Christianity, to exclude a soul from everlasting life. Such men are so watchful to censure, that they have seldom much care to look for favorable interpretations of ambiguities, to set the general tenor of life against single failures, or to know how soon any slip of inadvertency has been expiated by sorrow and retraction; but let fly their fulminations, without mercy or prudence, against slight offences or casual temerities, against crimes never committed, or immediately repented.

The infidel knows well what he is doing. He is endeavouring to supply, by authority, the deficiency of his arguments, and to make his cause less invidious by showing numbers on his side; he will therefore not change his conduct till he reforms his principles. But the zealot should recollect, that

* "Therefore no heretics desire to spread
Their wild opinions like these Epicures;
For so their staggering thoughts are computed,
And other men's assent their doubt assures."
DAVIES.

he is laboring, by this frequency of excommunication, against his own cause, and voluntarily adding strength to the enemies of truth. It must always be the condition of a great part of mankind to reject and embrace tenets upon the authority of those whom they think wiser than themselves; and therefore the addition of every name to infidelity in some degree invalidates that argument upon which the religion of multitudes is necessarily founded.

Men may differ from each other in many religious opinions, and yet all may retain the essentials of Christianity. Men may sometimes eagerly dispute, and yet not differ much from one another. The rigorous persecutors of error should therefore enlighten their zeal with knowledge, and temper their orthodoxy with charity; that charity, without which orthodoxy is vain; charity that "thinketh no evil," but "hopeth all things," and "endureth all things."

Whether Browne has been numbered among the contemners of religion, by the fury of its friends or the artifice of its enemies, it is no difficult task to replace him among the most zealous professors of Christianity. He may, perhaps, in the ardor of his imagination, have hazarded an expression, which a mind intent upon faults may interpret into heresy, if considered apart from the rest of his discourse; but a phrase is not to be opposed to volumes. There is scarcely a writer to be found, whose profession was not divinity, that has so frequently testified his belief of the sacred writings, has appealed to them with such unlimited submission, or mentioned them with such unvaried reverence.

RELIGIO MEDICI.

PREFACE.

TO THE READER:

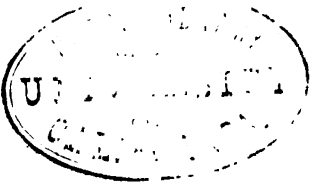
CERTAINLY that man were greedy of life, who should desire to live when all the world were at an end; and he must needs be very impatient, who would repine at death in the society of all things that suffer under it. Had not almost every man suffered by the press, or were not the tyranny thereof become universal, I had not wanted reason for complaint. But in times wherein I have lived to behold the highest perversion of that excellent invention, the name of his majesty defamed, the honor of parliament depraved, the writings of both depravedly, anticipatively, counterfeitly imprinted; complaints may seem ridiculous in private persons; and men of my condition may be as incapable of affronts, as hopeless of their reparations. And truly had not the duty I owe unto the importunity of friends, and the allegiance I must ever acknowledge unto truth, prevailed with me; the inactivity of my disposition might have made these

sufferings continual, and time, that brings other things to light, should have satisfied me in the remedy of its oblivion. But because things, evidently false, are not only printed, but many things of truth most falsely set forth, in this latter I could not but think myself engaged. For though we have no power to redress the former, yet in the other, reparation being within ourselves, I have at present represented unto the world a full and intended copy of that piece which was most imperfectly and surreptitiously published before.

This I confess, about seven years past, with some others of affinity thereto, for my private exercise and satisfaction, I had at leisurable hours composed; which being communicated unto one, it became common unto many, and was by transcription successively corrupted, until it arrived in a most depraved copy at the press. He that shall peruse that work, and shall take notice of sundry particulars and personal expressions therein, will easily discern the intention was not public; and being a private exercise directed to myself, what is delivered therein was rather a memorial unto me, than an example or rule unto any other; and therefore if there be any singularity therein correspondent unto the private conceptions of any man, it doth not advantage them; or if

dissentaneous thereunto, it no way overthrows them. It was penned in such a place, and with such disadvantage, that (I protest) from the first setting of pen unto paper, I had not the assistance of any good book, whereby to promote my invention, or relieve my memory; and therefore there might be many real lapses therein, which others might take notice of, and more that I suspected myself. It was set down many years past, and was the sense of my conceptions at that time, not an immutable law unto my advancing judgment at all times; and therefore there might be many things therein plausible unto my passed apprehension, which are not agreeable unto my present self. There are many things delivered rhetorically, many expressions therein merely tropical, and as they best illustrate my intention; and therefore also there are many things to be taken in a soft and flexible sense, and not to be called unto the rigid test of reason. Lastly, all that is contained therein, is in submission unto maturer discernments; and as I have declared, shall no further father them than the best and learned judgments shall authorize them: under favor of which considerations I have made its secrecy public, and committed the truth thereof to every ingenuous reader.

THO. BROWNE.



RELIGIO MEDICI.

THE FIRST PART.

For my religion, though there be several circumstances that might persuade the world I have none at all, as the general scandal of my profession, the natural course of my studies, the indifferency of my behaviour and discourse in matters of religion, neither violently defending one, nor with that common ardor and contention opposing another; yet in despite hereof, I dare, without usurpation, assume the honorable style of a Christian. Not that I merely owe this title to the font, my education, or clime wherein I was born, as being bred up either to confirm those principles my parents instilled into my understanding, or by a general consent proceed in the religion of my coun-

try. But having, in my riper years and confirmed judgment, seen and examined all, I find myself obliged, by the principles of grace, and the law of mine own reason, to embrace no other name but this. Neither doth herein my zeal so far make me forget the general charity I owe unto humanity, as rather to hate than pity Turks, Infidels, and (what is worse) Jews; rather contenting myself to enjoy that happy style, than maligning those who refuse so glorious a title.

But because the name of a Christian is become too general to express our faith, there being a geography of religion as well as lands, and every clime distinguished not only by their laws and limits, but circumscribed by their doctrines and rules of faith; to be particular, I am of that reformed, new-cast religion, wherein I dislike nothing but the name;* of the same belief our Saviour taught, the Apostles disseminated, the Fathers authorized, and the martyrs confirmed; but by the sinister ends of princes, the ambition and avarice of prelates, and the fatal corruption of times, so decayed, impaired, and fallen from its native beauty, that it required the careful and charitable hands of these times to restore it to its primitive integ-

* That is, Lutheran, Calvinist, Zuinglian, &c.

rity. (Now the accidental occasion whereupon, the slender means whereby, the low and abject condition of the person* by whom so good a work was set on foot, which in our adversaries beget contempt and scorn, fills me with wonder,) and is the very same objection the insolent Pagans first cast at Christ and his disciples.

Yet have I not so shaken hands with those desperate resolutions, who had rather venture at large their decayed bottom, than bring her in to be new trimmed in the dock; who had rather promiscuously retain all, than abridge any, and obstinately be what they are, than what they have been, as to stand in diameter and sword's point with them.† We have reformed from them, not against them; for omitting those improperations, and terms of scurrility betwixt us, which only difference our affections, and not our cause, there is between us one common name and appellation, one faith and necessary body of principles common to us both; and therefore I am not scrupulous to converse and live with them, to enter their churches in defect of ours, and either pray

* Luther.

† The meaning is, I have not so deserted or bid farewell to those desperate resolvers, the Romanists, as to be at sword's point with them.

with them, or for them. I could never perceive any rational consequence from those many texts which prohibit the children of Israel to pollute themselves with the temples of the heathens; we being all Christians, and not divided by such detested impieties as might profane our prayers, or the place wherein we make them; or that a resolved conscience may not adore her Creator any where, especially in places devoted to his service; where if their devotions offend him, mine may please him; if theirs profane it, mine may hallow it. Holy water and crucifix (dangerous to the common people) deceive not my judgment, nor abuse my devotion at all. I am, I confess, naturally inclined to that, which misguided zeal terms superstition. My common conversation I do acknowledge austere, my behaviour full of rigor, sometimes not without morosity. Yet at my devotion I love to use the civility of my knee, my hat, and hand, with all those outward and sensible motions which may expresss or promote my invisible devotion. I should violate my own arm rather than a church, nor willingly deface the name of saint or martyr. At the sight of a cross or crucifix I can dispense with my hat, but scarce with the thought or memory of my Saviour. I cannot laugh at, but rather pity the fruitless journeys of pilgrims, or contemn

the miserable condition of friars; for though misplaced in circumstances, there is something in it of devotion. I could never hear the Ave-Mary bell* without an elevation, or think it a sufficient warrant, because they erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all, that is, in silence and dumb contempt; whilst therefore they directed their devotions to her, I offered mine to God, and rectified the errors of their prayers, by rightly ordering mine own. At a solemn procession I have wept abundantly, while my consorts, blind with opposition and prejudice, have fallen into an excess of scorn and laughter. There are questionless both in Greek, Roman, and African churches, solemnities and ceremonies, whereof the wiser zeals do make a Christian use, and stand condemned by us, not as evil in themselves, but as allurements and baits of superstition to those vulgar heads that look asquint on the face of truth, and those unstable judgments that cannot resist in the narrow point and centre of virtue without a reel or stagger to the circumference.

As there were many reformers, so likewise many reformations; every country proceed-

* A church bell that tolls every day at six and twelve o'clock; at the hearing whereof, every one, in what place soever, either of house or street, betakes himself to his prayer, which is commonly directed to the Virgin.

ing in a particular way and method, according as their national interest, together with their constitution and clime, inclined them; some angrily, and with extremity; others calmly, and with mediocrity, not rending but easily dividing the community, and leaving an honest possibility of a reconciliation; which though peaceable spirits do desire, and may conceive that revolution of time and the mercies of God may effect, yet that judgment that shall consider the present antipathies between the two extremes, their contrarieties in condition, affection, and opinion, may with the same hopes expect a union in the poles of heaven.

But to difference myself nearer, and draw into a lesser circle. There is no Church whose every part so squares unto my conscience; whose articles, constitutions, and customs, seem so consonant unto reason, and as it were framed to my particular devotion, as this whereof I hold my belief, the Church of England, to whose faith I am a sworn subject; and therefore in a double obligation subscribe unto her articles, and endeavour to observe her constitutions. Whatsoever is beyond, as points indifferent, I observe according to the rules of my private reason, or the humor and fashion of my devotion; neither believing this, because Luther affirmed it, or disproving that

because Calvin hath disavouched it. I condemn not all things in the Council of Trent, nor approve all in the Synod of Dort. In brief, where the Scripture is silent, the church is my text; where that speaks, 't is but my comment; where there is a joint silence of both, I borrow not the rules of my religion from Rome or Geneva, but the dictates of my own reason. It is an unjust scandal of our adversaries, and a gross error in ourselves, to compute the nativity of our religion from Henry the Eighth, who though he rejected the pope, refused not the faith of Rome, and effected no more than what his own predecessors desired and assayed in ages past, and was conceived the State of Venice would have attempted in our days.* It is as uncharitable a point in us to fall upon those popular scurrilities and opprobrious scoffs of the bishop of Rome, to whom, as a temporal prince, we owe the duty of good language: I confess there is a cause of passion between us. By his sentence I stand excommunicated. Heretic is the best language he affords me. Yet can no ear witness, I ever returned him the name of antichrist, man

* This expectation was in the time of pope Paul the Fifth, who, excommunicating that republic, gave occasion to the senate to banish all such of the clergy as would not, by reason of the pope's commands, administer the sacraments.

of sin, or whore of Babylon. It is the method of charity to suffer without reaction. Those usual satires and invectives of the pulpit may perchance produce a good effect on the vulgar, whose ears are opener to rhetoric than logic; yet do they in no wise confirm the faith of wiser believers, who know that a good cause needs not to be padroned by passion, but can sustain itself upon a temperate dispute.

I could never divide myself from any man upon the difference of an opinion, or be angry with his judgment for not agreeing with me in that, from which perhaps within a few days I should dissent myself. I have no genius to disputes in religion, and have often thought it wisdom to decline them, especially upon a disadvantage, or when the cause of truth might suffer in the weakness of my patronage. Where we desire to be informed, 't is good to contest with men above ourselves; but to confirm and establish our opinions, 't is best to argue with judgments below our own, that the frequent spoils and victories over their reasons, may settle in ourselves an esteem and confirmed opinion of our own. Every man is not a proper champion for truth, nor fit to take up the gauntlet in the cause of verity. Many from the ignorance of these maxims, and an inconsiderate zeal unto truth, have too rashly charged the

troops of error, and remain as trophies unto the enemies of truth. A man may be in as just possession of truth as of a city, and yet be forced to surrender; 't is therefore far better to enjoy her with peace, than to hazard her on a battle. If therefore there rise any doubts in my way, I do forget them, or at least defer them, till my better settled judgment, and more manly reason be able to resolve them; for I perceive every man's own reason is his best Œdipus, and will, upon a reasonable truce, find a way to loose those bonds wherewith the subtleties of error have enchained our more flexible and tender judgments. In philosophy, where truth seems double-faced, there is no man more paradoxical than myself. But in divinity I love to keep the road; and though not in an implicit, yet an humble faith, follow the great wheel of the church, by which I move, not reserving any proper poles or motion from the epicycle of my own brain. By this means I have no gap for heresy, schisms, or errors, of which at present I hope I shall not injure truth to say I have no taint or tincture. I must confess my greener studies have been polluted with two or three, not any begotten in the latter centuries, but old and obsolete, such as could never have been revived but by such extravagant and irregular heads as mine. For indeed heresies perish not

with their authors, but like the river Arethusa, though they lose their currents in one place, they rise up again in another. One general council is not able to extirpate one single heresy. It may be cancelled for the present; but revolution of time, and the like aspects from heaven, will restore it, when it will flourish till it be condemned again. For as though there were a metempsychosis, and the soul of one man passed into another, opinions do find, after certain revolutions, men and minds like those that first begat them. To see ourselves again, we need not look for Plato's year :* every man is not only himself; there have been many Diogenes, and as many Timons, though but few of that name; men are lived over again; the world is now as it was in ages past; there was none then, but there hath been some one since that parallels him, and as it were his revived self.

Now the first of mine was that of the Arabians, that the souls of men perished with their bodies, but should yet be raised again at the last day. Not that I did absolutely conceive a mortality of the soul; but if that were, which

* A revolution of certain thousand years, when all things should return unto their former state, and he be teaching again in his school as when he delivered this opinion.

faith, not philosophy, hath yet thoroughly disproved, and that both entered the grave together, yet I held the same conceit thereof that we all do of the body, that it rise again. Surely it is but the merits of our unworthy natures, if we sleep in darkness until the last alarm. A serious reflex upon my own unworthiness did make me backward from challenging this prerogative of my soul. So that I might enjoy my Saviour at the last, I could with patience be nothing almost unto eternity. The second was that of Origen, that God would not persist in his vengeance for ever, but after a definite time of his wrath, he would release the damned souls from torture. Which error I fell into upon a serious contemplation of the great attribute of God, his mercy; and did a little cherish it in myself, because I found therein no malice, and a ready weight to sway me from the other extreme of despair, whereunto melancholy and contemplative natures are too easily disposed. A third there is which I did never positively maintain or practise, but have often wished it had been consonant to truth, and not offensive to my religion, and that is, the prayer for the dead; whereunto I was inclined from some charitable inducements, whereby I could scarce contain my prayers for a friend at the ringing of a bell, or behold his corpse without an ori-

son for his soul. 'T was a good way methought to be remembered by posterity, and far more noble than a history. These opinions I never maintained with pertinacy, or endeavoured to inveigle any man's belief unto mine, nor so much as ever revealed or disputed them with my dearest friends; by which means I neither propagated them in others, nor confirmed them in myself; but suffering them to flame upon their own substance, without addition of new fuel, they went out insensibly of themselves. Therefore these opinions, though condemned by lawful councils, were not heresies in me, but bare errors, and single lapses of my understanding without a joint depravity of my will. Those have not only depraved understandings, but diseased affections, which cannot enjoy a singularity without a heresy, or be the author of an opinion without they be of a sect also. This was the villany of the first schism of Lucifer, who was not content to err alone, but drew into his faction many legions; and upon this experience he tempted only Eve, as well understanding the communicable nature of sin, and that to deceive but one, was tacitly and upon consequence to delude them both.

That heresies should arise, we have the prophecy of Christ; but that old ones should be abolished, we hold no prediction. That

there must be heresies, is true, not only in our church, but also in any other. Even in doctrines heretical, there will be superheresies; and Arians not only divided from their church, but also among themselves. For heads that are disposed unto schism and complexionally propense to innovation, are naturally disposed for a community, nor will be ever confined unto the order or economy of one body; and therefore when they separate from others, they knit but loosely among themselves; nor contented with a general breach or dichotomy with their church, do subdivide and mince themselves almost into atoms. 'T is true, that men of singular parts and humors have not been free from singular opinions and conceits in all ages; retaining something not only beside the opinion of his own church or any other, but also any particular author; which, notwithstanding, a sober judgment may do without offence or heresy; for there is yet, after all the decrees of councils, and the niceties of the schools, many things untouched, unimagined, wherein the liberty of an honest reason may play and expatiate with security, and far without the circle of a heresy.

As for those wingy mysteries in divinity, and airy subtilties in religion, which have unhinged the brains of better heads, they

never stretched the "pia mater" of mine. Methinks there be not impossibilities enough in religion, for an active faith; the deepest mysteries ours contains, have not only been illustrated, but maintained by syllogism, and the rule of reason. I love to lose myself in a mystery, to pursue my reason to an "O altitudo!" 'T is my solitary recreation to pose my apprehension with those involved enigmas and riddles of the trinity, with incarnation and resurrection. I can answer all the objections of satan and my rebellious reason, with that odd resolution I learned of Tertullian, "Certum est quia impossibile est." I desire to exercise my faith in the difficultest point; for to credit ordinary and visible objects, is not faith, but persuasion. Some believe the better for seeing Christ's sepulchre; and when they have seen the Red Sea, doubt not of the miracle. Now, contrarily, I bless myself, and am thankful that I lived not in the days of miracles, that I never saw Christ nor his disciples. I would not have been one of those Israelites that passed the Red Sea, nor one of Christ's patients on whom he wrought his wonders. Then had my faith been thrust upon me; nor should I enjoy that greater blessing pronounced to all that believe and saw not. 'T is an easy and necessary belief, to credit what our eye and sense hath examined I be-

lieve he was dead and buried, and rose again; and desire to see him in his glory, rather than to contemplate him in his cenotaph, or sepulchre. Nor is this much to believe; as we have reason, we owe this faith unto history. They only had the advantage of a bold and noble faith, who lived before his coming, who upon obscure prophecies and mystical types could raise a belief, and expect apparent impossibilities.

'T is true, there is an edge in all firm belief, and with an easy metaphor we may say the sword of faith; but in these obscurities I rather use it in the adjunct the Apostle gives it, a buckler; under which I conceive a wary combatant may lie invulnerable. Since I was of understanding to know we knew nothing, my reason hath been more pliable to the will of faith; I am now content to understand a mystery without a rigid definition, in an easy and Platonic description. That allegorical description of Hermes,* pleaseth me beyond all the metaphysical definitions of divines. Where I cannot satisfy my reason I love to humor my fancy. I had as lief you tell me that "anima est angelus hominis, est corpus Dei," as "entelechia"; "lux est umbra Dei," as "actus perspi-

* Sphæra cujus centrum ubique, circumferentia nullibi.

cui." Where there is an obscurity too deep for our reason, 't is good to sit down with a description, periphrasis, or adumbration; for by acquainting our reason how unable it is to display the visible and obvious effects of nature, it becomes more humble and submissive unto the subtilties of faith; and thus I teach my haggard and unreclaimed reason to stoop unto the lure of faith. I believe there was already a tree whose fruit our unhappy parents tasted, though in the same chapter when God forbids it, 't is positively said, the plants of the fields were not yet grown, for God had not caused it to rain upon the earth. I believe that the serpent, (if we shall literally understand it) from his proper form and figure, made his motion on his belly before the curse. I find the trial of the pucelage and virginity of women, which God ordained the Jews, is very fallible. Experience and history inform me, that not only many particular women, but likewise whole nations, have escaped the curse of childbirth, which God seems to pronounce upon the whole sex. Yet do I believe that all this is true, which indeed my reason would persuade me to be false; and this I think is no vulgar part of faith, to believe a thing not only above, but contrary to reason, and against the arguments of our proper senses.

In my solitary and retired imagination, ("neque enim cum porticus, aut me lectulus accepit, desum mihi,") I remember I am not alone, and therefore forget not to contemplate him and his attributes who is ever with me, especially those two mighty ones, his wisdom and eternity. With the one I recreate, with the other I confound my understanding; for who can speak of eternity without a solecism, or think thereof without an ecstasy? Time we may comprehend; 't is but five days elder than ourselves, and hath the same horoscope with the world; but to retire so far back as to apprehend a beginning, to give such an infinite start forwards as to conceive an end in an essence that we affirm hath neither the one nor the other, it puts my reason to St. Paul's sanctuary. My philosophy dares not say the angels can do it; God hath not made a creature that can comprehend him; 't is a privilege of his own nature. "I am that I am," was his own definition unto Moses; and 't was a short one, to confound mortality, that durst question God, or ask him what he was. Indeed he only is; all others have and shall be. But in eternity there is no distinction of tenses; and therefore that terrible term, "predestination," which hath troubled so many weak heads to conceive, and the wisest to explain, is in respect to God no pre-

scious determination of our estates to come, but a definitive blast of his will already fulfilled, and at the instant that he first decreed it; for to his eternity, which is indivisible and all together, the last trump is already sounded, the reprobates in the flame, and the blessed in Abraham's bosom. St. Peter speaks modestly, when he saith, "A thousand years to God are but as one day"; for to speak like a philosopher, those continued instances of time which flow into a thousand years, make not to him one moment. What to us is to come, to his eternity is present, his whole duration being but one permanent point, without succession, parts, flux, or division.

There is no attribute that adds more difficulty to the mystery of the trinity, where, though in a relative way of Father and Son, we must deny a priority. I wonder how Aristotle could conceive the world eternal, or how he could make good two eternities.* His similitude of a triangle, comprehended in a square, doth somewhat illustrate the trinity of our souls, and that the triple unity of God; for there is in us not three, but a trinity of souls, because there is in us, if not three distinct souls, yet differing faculties, that can, and do

* That is, that God and the world were both eternal.

subsist apart in different subjects, and yet in us are thus united as to make but one soul and substance. If one soul were so perfect as to inform three distinct bodies, that were a petty trinity. Conceive the distinct number of three, not divided nor separated by the intellect, but actually comprehended in its unity, and that is a perfect trinity. I have often admired the mystical way of Pythagoras, and the secret magic of numbers. "Beware of philosophy," is a precept not to be received in too large a sense; for in this mass of nature there is a set of things that carry in their front, though not in capital letters, yet in stenography and short characters, something of divinity; which to wiser reasons serve as luminaries in the abyss of knowledge, and to judicious beliefs, as scales and rundles to mount the pinnacles and highest pieces of divinity. The severe schools shall never laugh me out of the philosophy of Hermes, that this visible world is but a picture of the invisible, wherein, as in a portrait, things are not truly, but in equivocal shapes, and as they counterfeit some real substance in that invisible fabric.

The other attribute wherewith I recreate my devotion, is his wisdom, in which I am happy; and for the contemplation of this only, do not repent me that I was bred in the

way of study. The advantage I have of the vulgar, with the content and happiness I conceive therein, is an ample recompense for all my endeavours, in what part of knowledge soever. Wisdom is his most beauteous attribute. No man can attain unto it; yet Solomon pleased God when he desired it. He is wise, because he knows all things; and he knoweth all things, because he made them all: but his greatest knowledge is in comprehending that he made not, that is, himself. And this is also the greatest knowledge in man. For this do I honor my own profession, and embrace the counsel even of the devil himself. Had he read such a lecture in paradise, as he did at Delphos,* we had better known ourselves; nor had we stood in fear to know him. I know he is wise in all, wonderful in what we conceive, but far more in what we comprehend not; for we behold him but asquint, upon reflex or shadow; our understanding is dimmer than Moses's eye; we are ignorant of the back parts or lower side of his divinity. Therefore to pry into the maze of his counsels, is not only folly in man, but presumption even in angels. Like us they are his servants, not his senators. He holds no council but that mystical one of the trinity;

* Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, Nosce teipsum.

wherein, though there be three persons, there is but one mind that decrees without contradiction. Nor needs he any; his actions are not begot with deliberation; his wisdom naturally knows what's best; his intellect stands ready fraught with the superlative and purest ideas of goodness. Consultation and election, which are two motions in us, make but one in him; his action springing from his power, at the first touch of his will. These are contemplations metaphysical: my humble speculations have another method, and are content to trace and discover those expressions he hath left in his creatures, and the obvious effects of nature. There is no danger to profound these mysteries, no "sanctum sanctorum" in philosophy. The world was made to be inhabited by beasts, but studied and contemplated by man: 't is the debt of our reason we owe unto God, and the homage we pay for not being beasts. Without this, the world is still as though it had not been, or as it was before the sixth day, when as yet there was not a creature that could conceive, or say there was a world. The wisdom of God receives small honor from those vulgar heads that rudely stare about, and with a gross rusticity admire his works. Those highly magnify him, whose judicious inquiry into his acts, and deliberate research into his creatures, return the duty of a devout and learned admiration. Therefore,

Search while thou wilt, and let thy reason go
To ransom truth even to the abyss below;
Rally the scattered causes; and that line
Which nature twists, be able to untwine.
It is thy Maker's will, for unto none
But unto reason can he e'er be known.
The devils do know thee, but those damned meteors
Build not thy glory, but confound thy creatures.
Teach my endeavours so thy works to read,
That learning them in thee, I may proceed.
Give thou my reason that instructive flight,
Whose weary wings may on thy hands still light.
Teach me so to soar aloft, yet ever so,
When near the sun to stoop again below.
Thus shall my humble feathers safely hover,
And though near earth, more than the heavens discover.
And then at last, when homeward I shall drive
Rich with the spoils of nature to my hive,
There will I sit, like that industrious fly,
Buzzing thy praises, which shall never die,
Till death abrupts them, and succeeding glory
Bid me go on in a more lasting story.

And this is almost all wherein an humble creature may endeavour to requite, and some way to retribute unto his Creator: for if not he that saith, Lord, Lord, but he that doth the will of the Father, shall be saved; certainly our will must be our performances, and our intents make out our actions; otherwise our pious labors shall find anxiety in our graves, and our best endeavours not hope, but fear a resurrection.

There is but one first cause, and four second causes of all things. Some are without efficient, as God; others without matter, as angels; some without form, as the first matter: but every essence, created or uncreated, hath its final cause, and some positive end both of its essence and operation. This is the cause I grope after in the works of nature. On this hangs the providence of God. To raise so beauteous a structure, as the world and the creatures thereof, was but his art; but their sundry and divided operations, with their predestinated ends, are from the treasury of his wisdom. In the causes, nature, and affections of the eclipses of the sun and moon, there is most excellent speculation; but to profound farther, and to contemplate a reason why his providence hath so disposed and ordered their motions in that vast circle, as to conjoin and obscure each other, is a sweeter piece of reason, and a diviner point of philosophy. Therefore sometimes, and in some things, there appears to me as much divinity in Galen his books "de Usu Partium," as in Suarez's metaphysics. Had Aristotle been as curious in the inquiry of this cause as he was of the other, he had not left behind him an imperfect piece of philosophy, but an absolute tract of divinity.

"Natura nihil agit frustra," is the only indisputable axiom in philosophy. There are no grotesques in nature; not any thing framed to fill up empty cantons and unnecessary spaces. In the most imperfect creatures, and such as were not preserved in the ark, but having their seeds and principles in the womb of nature, are every where, where the power of the sun is; in these is the wisdom of his hand discovered. Out of this rank Solomon chose the object of his admiration. Indeed, what reason may not go to school to the wisdom of bees, ants, and spiders? What wise hand teacheth them to do what reason cannot teach us? Ruder heads stand amazed at those prodigious pieces of nature, whales, elephants, dromedaries, and camels. These, I confess, are the colossuses and majestic pieces of her hand. But in these narrow engines there is more curious mathematics; and the civility of these little citizens more neatly sets forth the wisdom of their Maker. Who admires not Regiomontanus his fly beyond his eagle, or wonders not more at the operation of two souls in those little bodies, than but one in the trunk of a cedar?*

* Of these we find the following notice in Du Bartas, as translated by Sylvester.

"Why should I not that wooden eagle mention?
(A learned German's late admired invention)

I could never content my contemplation with those general pieces of wonder, the flux and reflux of the sea, the increase of Nile, the conversion of the needle to the north; and have studied to match and parallel those in the more obvious and neglected pieces of nature, which without further travel I can do in the cosmography of myself. We carry with us the wonders we seek without us. There is all Africa and her prodigies in us. We are that bold and adventurous piece of nature, which he that studies wisely learns in a compendium, what others labor at in a divided piece and endless volume.

Which mounting from his fist that framed her,
Flew far to meet an Almain emperor;
And having met him, with her nimble train,
And weary wings turning about again,
Followed him close unto the castle gate
Of Nuremberg; whom all the shows of state,
Streets hung with arras, arches curious built,
Loud thundering cannons, columns richly gilt,
Gray-headed senate, and youth's gallantise,
Graced not so much as only this device.
Once as this artist, more with mirth than meat,
Feasted some friends that he esteemed great,
From under 's hand an iron fly flew out,
Which having flown a perfect round about,
With weary wings return'd unto her master,
And (as judicious) on his arm she placed her."

Thus there are two books from whence I collect my divinity; besides that written one of God, another of his servant Nature, that universal and public manuscript, that lies expansed unto the eyes of all. Those that never saw him in the one, have discovered him in the other. This was the scripture and theology of the heathens. The natural motion of the sun made them more admire him, than its supernatural station did the children of Israel. The ordinary effects of nature wrought more admiration in them, than in the other all his miracles. Surely the heathens knew better how to join and read these mystical letters, than we Christians, who cast a more careless eye on these common hieroglyphics, and disdain to suck divinity from the flowers of nature. Nor do I so forget God as to adore the name of Nature; which I define not with the schools, to be the principle of motion and rest, but that straight and regular line, that settled and constant course the wisdom of God hath ordained the actions of his creatures, according to their several kinds. To make a revolution every day, is the nature of the sun, because of that necessary course which God hath ordained it, from which it cannot swerve, by a faculty from that voice which first did give it motion. Now this course of nature God seldom alters or perverts; but, like an excellent artist, hath so con-

trived his work, that with the self-same instrument, without a new creation, he may effect his obscurest designs. Thus he sweeteneth the water with a wood, preserveth the creatures in the ark, which the blast of his mouth might have as easily created; for God is like a skilful geometrician, who when more easily, and with one stroke of his compass, he might describe or divide a right line, had yet rather do this in a circle or longer way, according to the constituted and fore-laid principles of his art. Yet this rule of his he doth sometimes pervert, to acquaint the world with his prerogative, lest the arrogancy of our reason should question his power, and conclude he could not. And thus I call the effects of nature the works of God, whose hand and instrument she only is; and therefore to ascribe his actions unto her, is to devolve the honor of the principal agent, upon the instrument; which if with reason we may do, then let our hammers rise up and boast they have built our houses, and our pens receive the honor of our writings. I hold there is a general beauty in the works of God, and therefore no deformity in any kind or species of creature whatsoever. I cannot tell by what logic we call a toad, a bear, or an elephant ugly, they being created in those outward shapes and figures which best express those actions of

their inward forms; and having passed that general visitation of God, who saw that all that he had made was good, that is, conformable to his will, which abhors deformity, and is the rule of order and beauty. There is no deformity but in monstrosity, wherein notwithstanding there is a kind of beauty; nature so ingeniously contriving the irregular parts, as they become sometimes more remarkable than the principal fabric. To speak yet more narrowly, there was never any thing ugly or misshapen, but the chaos; wherein notwithstanding, to speak strictly, there was no deformity, because no form; nor was it yet impregnate by the voice of God. Now nature is not at variance with art, nor art with nature; they being both servants of his providence. Art is the perfection of nature. Were the world now as it was the sixth day, there were yet a chaos. Nature hath made one world, and art another. In brief, all things are artificial; for nature is the art of God.*

This is the ordinary and open way of his providence, which art and industry have in a good part discovered, whose effects we may foretell without an oracle. To foreshow these, is not prophecy, but prognostication. There is

* "Nature," says Hobbes in his Leviathan, "is the art whereby God governs the world."

another way full of meanders and labyrinths, whereof the devil and spirits have no exact ephemerides, and that is a more particular and obscure method of his providence, directing the operations of individuals and single essences. 'This we call fortune, that serpentine and crooked line, whereby he draws those actions his wisdom intends in a more unknown and secret way.' This cryptic and involved method of his providence have I ever admired; nor can I relate the history of my life, the occurrences of my days, the escapes of dangers and hits of chance, with a "Beso las manos" to fortune, or a bare gramercy to my good stars. Abraham might have thought the ram in the thicket came thither by accident. Human reason would have said, that mere chance conveyed Moses in the ark to the sight of Pharaoh's daughter. What a labyrinth is there in the story of Joseph, able to convert a Stoic! Surely there are in every man's life certain rubs, doublings, and wrenches, which pass a while under the effects of chance, but at the last, well examined, prove the mere hand of God. 'T was not dumb chance, that to discover the fougade or powder-plot, contrived a miscarriage in the letter. I like the victory of '88 the better, for that one occurrence which our enemies imputed to our dishonor and the partiality of fortune, to wit,

the tempests and contrariety of winds. King Philip did not detract from the nation, when he said he sent his armada to fight with men, and not to combat with the winds. Where there is a manifest disproportion between the powers and forces of two several agents, upon a maxim of reason, we may promise the victory to the superior; but when unexpected accidents slip in, and unthought-of occurrences intervene, these must proceed from a power that owes no obedience to those axioms; where, as in the writing upon the wall, we may behold the hand but see not the spring that moves it. The success of that petty province of Holland (of which the Grand Seignior proudly said, if they should trouble him as they did the Spaniard, he would send his men with shovels and pickaxes, and throw it into the sea) I cannot altogether ascribe to the ingenuity and industry of the people, but the mercy of God, that hath disposed them to such a thriving genius; and to the will of his Providence, that disposeth her favor to each country in their preördinate season. All cannot be happy at once; for because the glory of one state depends upon the ruin of another, there is a revolution and vicissitude of their greatness, and must obey the swing of that wheel, not moved by intelligences, but by the hand of God, whereby all estates arise to their

zenith and vertical points, according to their predestinated periods! For the lives, not only of men, but of commonwealths, and the whole world, run not upon a helix that still enlargeth, but on a circle, where, arriving to their meridian, they decline in obscurity, and fall under the horizon again.

These must not therefore be named the effects of fortune, but in a relative way, and as we term the works of nature. It was the ignorance of man's reason that begat this very name, and by a careless term miscalled the providence of God. For there is no liberty for causes to operate in a loose and straggling way; nor any effect whatsoever, but hath its warrant from some universal or superior cause. 'T is not a ridiculous devotion to say a prayer before a game at tables; for even in sortileges and matters of greatest uncertainty, there is a settled and preördered course of effects. It is we that are blind, not fortune. Because our eye is too dim to discover the mystery of her effects, we foolishly paint her blind, and hoodwink the providence of the Almighty. I cannot justify that contemptible proverb, that fools only are fortunate; or that insolent paradox, that a wise man is out of the reach of fortune; much less those opprobrious epithets of poets, whore, bawd, and strumpet. 'T is, I confess, the com-

mon fate of men of singular gifts of mind, to be destitute of those of fortune; which doth not any way deject the spirit of wiser judgments, who thoroughly understand the justice of this proceeding; and being enriched with higher donatives, cast a more careless eye on these vulgar parts of felicity. It is a most unjust ambition to desire to engross the mercies of the Almighty, not to be content with the goods of mind, without a possession of those of body or fortune; and it is an error worse than heresy, to adore these complemental and circumstantial pieces of felicity, and undervalue those perfections and essential points of happiness, wherein we resemble our Maker. To wiser desires it is satisfaction enough to deserve, though not to enjoy, the favors of fortune; let Providence provide for fools. 'T is not partiality, but equity in God, who deals with us but as our natural parents. Those that are able of body and mind, he leaves to their deserts; to those of weaker merits he imparts a larger portion, and pieces out the defect of one, by the excess of the other. Thus have we no just quarrel with nature, for leaving us naked; or to envy the horns, hoofs, skins, and furs of other creatures, being provided with reason, that can supply them all. We need not labor with so many arguments to confute judicial astrology; for if there be a

truth therein, it doth not injure divinity. If to be born under Mercury disposeth us to be witty, under Jupiter to be wealthy; I do not owe a knee unto these, but unto that merciful hand that hath ordered my indifferent and uncertain nativity unto such benevolous aspects. Those that hold that all things are governed by fortune, had not erred, had they not persisted there. The Romans, that erected a temple to fortune, acknowledged therein, though in a blinder way, somewhat of divinity; for in a wise supputation all things begin and end in the Almighty. There is a nearer way to heaven than Homer's chain; an easy logic may conjoin heaven and earth in one argument, and with less than a sorites resolve all things into God. For though we christen effects by their most sensible and nearest causes, yet is God the true and infallible cause of all; whose concourse, though it be general, yet doth it subdivide itself into the particular actions of every thing, and is that spirit, by which each singular essence not only subsists, but performs its operation.

The bad construction and perverse comment on these pair of second causes, or visible hands of God, have perverted the devotion of many unto atheism; who, forgetting the honest advisoes of faith, have listened unto the conspiracy of passion and reason. I have therefore always

endeavoured to compose those feuds and angry dissensions between affection, faith, and reason; for there is in our soul a kind of triumvirate, or triple government of three competitors, which distract the peace of this our commonwealth, not less than did that other the state of Rome.

As reason is a rebel unto faith, so passion unto reason. As the propositions of faith seem absurd unto reason, so the theorems of reason unto passion, and both unto reason. Yet a moderate and peaceable discretion may so state and order the matter, that they may be all kings, and yet make but one monarchy, every one exercising his sovereignty and prerogative in a due time and place, according to the restraint and limit of circumstance. There is, as in philosophy, so in divinity, sturdy doubts, and boisterous objections, wherewith the unhappiness of our knowledge too nearly acquainteth us. More of these no man hath known than myself; which I confess I conquered not in a martial posture, but on my knees. For our endeavours are not only to combat with doubts, but always to dispute with the devil. The villany of that spirit takes a hint of infidelity from our studies, and by demonstrating a naturality in one way, makes us mistrust a miracle in another. Thus having perused the archi-

doxes and read the secret sympathies of things, he would dissuade my belief from the miracle of the brazen serpent, make me conceit that image worked by sympathy, and was but an Egyptian trick to cure their diseases without a miracle. Again, having seen some experiments of bitumen, and having read far more of naphtha, he whispered to my curiosity the fire of the altar might be natural, and bid me mistrust a miracle in Elias, when he entrenched the altar round with water;* for that inflammable substance yields not easily unto water, but flames in the arms of its antagonist. And thus would he inveigle my belief to think the combustion of Sodom might be natural, and that there was an asphaltic and bituminous nature in that lake before the fire of Gomorrah. I know that manna is now plentifully gathered in Calabria; and Josephus tells me, in his days it was plentiful in Arabia. The devil therefore made the query, Where was then the miracle in the days of Moses? the Israelite saw but that in his time, the natives of those countries behold in ours. Thus the devil played at chess with me, and yielding a pawn, thought to gain a queen of me, taking advantage of my honest endeavours; and whilst I labored to raise the

*1 Kings, xviii.

structure of my reason, he strived to undermine the edifice of my faith.

Neither had these or any other ever such advantage of me, as to incline me to any point of infidelity or desperate positions of atheism; for I have been these many years of opinion there was never any. Those that held religion was the difference of man from beasts, have spoken probably, and proceed upon a principle as inductive as the other. That doctrine of Epicurus, that denied the providence of God, was no atheism, but a magnificent and high-strained conceit of his majesty, which he deemed too sublime to mind the trivial actions of those inferior creatures. That fatal necessity of the Stoics, is nothing but the immutable law of his will. Those that heretofore denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost, have been condemned, but as heretics; and those that now deny our Saviour (though more than heretics) are not so much as atheists; for though they deny two persons in the trinity, they hold as we do, there is but one God.

That villain and secretary of hell, that composed that miscreant piece of the Three Impostors, though divided from all religions, and was neither Jew, Turk, nor Christian, was not a positive atheist. I confess every country hath its Machiavel, every age its Lucian, whereof

common heads must not hear, nor more advanced judgments too rashly venture on. It is the rhetoric of Satan, and may pervert a loose or prejudicate belief.

I confess I have perused them all, and can discover nothing that may startle a discreet belief; yet are there heads carried off with the wind and breath of such motives. I remember a doctor in physic of Italy, who could not perfectly believe the immortality of the soul, because Galen seemed to make a doubt thereof. With another I was familiarly acquainted in France, a divine, and a man of singular parts, that on the same point was so plunged and gravelled with three lines of Seneca,* that all our antidotes, drawn from both Scripture and philosophy, could not expel the poison of his error. There are a set of heads, that can credit the relations of mariners, yet question the testimonies of St. Paul; and peremptorily maintain the traditions of Ælian or Pliny, yet in histories of Scripture raise queries and objections, believing no more than they can parallel in human authors. I confess there are in Scripture, stories that do exceed the fables of poets, and to a captious

* Post mortem nihil est, ipsaque mors nihil. Mors individua est, noxia corpori, nec patiens animæ. Toti morimur, nullaque pars manet nostri.

reader sound like Garagantua or Bevis. Search all the legends of times past, and the fabulous conceits of these present, and 't will be hard to find one that deserves to carry the buckler unto Sampson; yet is all this of an easy possibility, if we conceive a divine concourse, or an influence from the little finger of the Almighty. It is impossible that either in the discourse of man, or in the infallible voice of God, to the weakness of our apprehensions, there should not appear irregularities, contradictions, and antinomies. Myself could show a catalogue of doubts, never yet imagined nor questioned, as I know, which are not resolved at the first hearing; not fantastic queries, or objections of air; for I cannot hear of atoms in divinity. I can read the history of the pigeon that was sent out of the ark, and returned no more, yet not question how she found out her mate that was left behind; that Lazarus was raised from the dead, yet not demand where in the interim his soul awaited; or raise a law-case, whether his heir might lawfully detain his inheritance bequeathed unto him by his death, and he, though restored to life, have no plea or title unto his former possessions. Whether Eve was framed out of the left side of Adam, I dispute not; because I stand not yet assured which is the right side of a man, or whether there be any

such distinction in nature. That she was edified out of the rib of Adam, I believe, yet raise no question who shall arise with that rib at the resurrection. Whether Adam was an hermaphrodite, as the Rabbins contend upon the letter of the text, because it is contrary to reason there should be an hermaphrodite before there was a woman, or a composition of two natures, before there was a second composed. Likewise, whether the world was created in autumn, summer, or the spring, because it was created in them all; for whatsoever sign the sun possesseth, those four seasons are actually existent. It is the nature of this luminary to distinguish the several seasons of the year, all which it makes at one time in the whole earth, and successively in any part thereof. There are a bundle of curiosities, not only in philosophy, but in divinity, proposed and discussed by men of most supposed abilities, which indeed are not worthy our vacant hours, much less our serious studies; pieces only fit to be placed in Pantagruel's library,* or bound up with "Tartaretus de modo cacandi."

These are niceties that become not those that pursue so serious a mystery. There are others more generally questioned and called to

* In Rabelais.

the bar, yet methinks of an easy and possible truth.

'T is ridiculous to put off or down the general flood of Noah, in that particular inundation of Deucalion. That there was a deluge once, seems not to me so great a miracle, as that there is not one always. How all the kinds of creatures, not only in their own bulks, but with a competency of food and sustenance, might be preserved in one ark, and within the extent of three hundred cubits, to a reason that rightly examines it, will appear very feasible. There is another secret not contained in the Scripture, which is more hard to comprehend, and put the honest Father* to the refuge of a miracle; and that is, not only how the distinct pieces of the world, and divided islands, should be first planted by men, but inhabited by tigers, panthers, and bears. How America abounded with beasts of prey and noxious animals, yet contained not in it that necessary creature, a horse, is very strange. By what passage those, not only birds, but dangerous and unwelcome beasts came over; how there be creatures there, which are not found in this triple continent; all which must needs be strange unto us, that hold but one ark, and that the creatures

* Augustin.

began their progress from the mountains of Ararat. They who, to save this, would make the deluge particular, proceed upon a principle that I can no way grant; not only upon the negative of holy Scriptures, but of mine own reason, whereby I can make it probable, that the world was as well peopled in the time of Noah, as in ours; and fifteen hundred years to people the world, as full a time for them, as four thousand years since have been to us. There are other assertions and common tenents drawn from Scripture, and generally believed as Scripture, whereunto, notwithstanding, I would never betray the liberty of my reason. 'T is a paradox to me, that Methusalem was the longest lived of all the children of Adam, and no man will be able to prove it; when from the process of the text, I can manifest it may be otherwise. That Judas perished by hanging himself, there is no certainty in Scripture; though in one place it seems to affirm it, and by a doubtful word hath given occasion to translate it; yet in another place, in a more punctual description, it makes it improbable, and seems to overthrow it.* That our fathers,

* Matthew xxvii, 5; Acts i. 18. The doubtful word he speaks of is in Matthew; it is ἀπήγξατο, which signifieth suffocation as well as hanging; ἀπελθὼν ἀπήγξατο, which may signify literally, "after he went out he was choaked."

after the flood, erected the tower of Babel, to preserve themselves against a second deluge, is generally opinioned and believed, yet is there another intention of theirs expressed in Scripture. Besides, it is improbable from the circumstance of the place, that is, a plain in the land of Shinar. These are no points of faith, and therefore may admit a free dispute. There are yet others, and those familiarly concluded from the text, wherein (under favor) I see no consequence. The Church of Rome confidently proves the opinion of tutelary angels, from that answer when Peter knocked at the door; "'T is not he, but his angel;" that is, might some say, his messenger, or some body from him; for so the original signifies; and is as likely to be the doubtful family's meaning. This exposition I once suggested to a young divine, that answered upon this point; to which I remember the Franciscan opponent replied no more but that it was a new and no authentic interpretation.

These are but the conclusions and fallible discourses of man upon the word of God, for such I do believe the holy Scriptures; yet were it of man, I could not choose but say, it was the most singular and superlative piece that hath been extant since the creation. Were I a Pagan, I should not refrain the lecture of it; and can-

not but commend the judgment of Ptolemy, that thought not his library complete without it. The Alcoran of the Turks (I speak without prejudice) is an ill-composed piece, containing in it vain and ridiculous errors in philosophy, impossibilities, fictions, and vanities beyond laughter, maintained by evident and open sophisms, the policy of ignorance, deposition of universities, and banishment of learning; that hath gotten foot by arms and violence. This, without a blow, hath disseminated itself through the whole earth. It is not unremarkable what Philo first observed, that the law of Moses continued two thousand years without the least alteration; whereas, we see the laws of other commonweals do alter with occasions; and even those, that pretended their original from some divinity, to have vanished without trace or memory. I believe, besides Zoroaster, there were divers others that writ before Moses, who, notwithstanding, have suffered the common fate of time. Men's works have an age like themselves; and though they outlive their authors, yet have they a stint and period to their duration. This only is a work too hard for the teeth of time, and cannot perish but in the general flames, when all things shall confess their ashes.

I have heard some with deep sighs lament the lost lines of Cicero; others with as many

groans deplore the combustion of the library of Alexandria. For my own part, I think there be too many in the world, and could with patience behold the urn and ashes of the Vatican, could I, with a few others, recover the perished leaves of Solomon. I would not omit a copy of Enoch's pillars, had they many nearer authors than Josephus, or did not relish somewhat of the fable.* Some men have written more than others have spoken. Pineda quotes more authors in one work, than are necessary in a whole world.† Of those three great inventions in Germany, there are two‡ which are not without their incommodities, and 't is disputable whether they exceed not their use and commo-

* The story is, that Enoch, or his father Seth, having been informed by Adam that the world was to perish once by water, and a second time by fire, caused two pillars to be erected, the one of stone against the water, and another of brick against the fire; and that upon those pillars was engraven all such learning as had been delivered to, or invented by mankind; and that thence it came that all knowledge and learning was not lost by means of the flood, by reason that one of the pillars (though the other perished) did remain after the flood; and Josephus witnesseth, till his time. *Jewish Antiquities*, Book I. ch. 3.

† Pineda, in his "Monarchia Ecclesiastica," quotes one thousand and forty authors.

‡ Printing and gunpowder.

dities. 'T is not a melancholy "Utinam" of my own, but the desires of better heads, that there were a general synod; not to unite the incompatible difference of religion, but for the benefit of learning, to reduce it as it lay at first, in a few and solid authors; and to condemn to the fire those swarms and millions of rhapsodies, begotten only to distract and abuse the weaker judgments of scholars, and to maintain the trade and mystery of typographers.

I cannot but wonder with what exception the Samaritans could confine their belief to the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses. I am ashamed at the Rabbinical interpretation of the Jews upon the Old Testament, as much as their defection from the New. And truly it is beyond wonder, how that contemptible and degenerate issue of Jacob, once so devoted to Ethnic superstition, and so easily seduced to the idolatry of their neighbours, should now, in such an obstinate and peremptory belief, adhere unto their own doctrine, expect impossibilities, and, in the face and eye of the church, persist without the least hope of conversion. This is a vice in them, that were a virtue in us; for obstinacy in a bad cause, is but constancy in a good. And herein I must accuse those of my own religion; for there is not any of such a fugitive faith, such an unstable be-

lief, as a Christian; none that do so oft transform themselves, not unto several shapes of Christianity and of the same species, but unto more unnatural and contrary forms of Jew and Mahometan; that from the name of Saviour, can condescend to the bare term of prophet; and from an old belief that he is come, fall to a new expectation of his coming. It is the promise of Christ to make us all one flock; but how and when this union shall be, is as obscure to me as the last day. Of those four members of religion we hold a slender proportion. There are, I confess, some new additions, yet small to those which accrue to our adversaries, and those only drawn from the revolt of Pagans, men but of negative impieties, and such as deny Christ, but because they never heard of him. But the religion of the Jew is expressly against the Christian, and the Mahometan against both. For the Turk, in the bulk he now stands, he is beyond all hope of conversion. If he fall asunder, there may be conceived hopes, but not without strong improbabilities. The Jew is obstinate in all fortunes; the persecution of fifteen hundred years hath but confirmed them in their error. They have already endured whatsoever may be inflicted, and have suffered, in a bad cause, even to the condemnation of their enemies. Persecution is a bad and indirect

way to plant religion. It hath been the unhappy method of angry devotions, not only to confirm honest religion, but wicked heresies, and extravagant opinions. It was the first stone and basis of our faith. None can more justly boast of persecutions, and glory in the number and valor of martyrs; for, to speak properly, those are true and almost only examples of fortitude. Those that are fetched from the field, or drawn from the actions of the camp, are not ofttimes so truly precedents of valor as audacity, and at the best attain but to some bastard piece of fortitude. If we shall strictly examine the circumstances and requisites which Aristotle requires to true and perfect valor, we shall find the name only in his master Alexander, and as little in that Roman worthy, Julius Cæsar; and if any, in that easy and active way, have done so nobly as to deserve that name, yet in the passive and more terrible piece these have surpassed, and in a more heroical way may claim the honor of that title. 'T is not in the power of every honest faith to proceed thus far, or pass to heaven through the flames. Every one hath it not in that full measure, nor in so audacious and resolute a temper, as to endure those terrible tests and trials; who notwithstanding, in a peaceable way, do truly adore their Saviour, and have, no doubt, a faith acceptable in the eyes of God.

Now as all that die in the war are not termed soldiers; so neither can I properly term all those that suffer in matters of religion, martyrs. The council of Constance condemns John Huss for a heretic. The stories of his own party style him a martyr. He must need offend the divinity of both, that says he was neither the one nor the other. There are many, questionless, canonized on earth, that shall never be saints in heaven; and have their names in histories and martyrologies, who, in the eyes of God, are not so perfect martyrs, as was the wise heathen Socrates, that suffered on a fundamental point of religion, the unity of God. I have often pitied the miserable bishop that suffered in the cause of antipodes; * yet cannot choose but accuse him of as much madness, for exposing his living on such a trifle, as those of ignorance and folly, that condemned him. I think my conscience will not give me the lie, if I say there are not many extant that in a noble way fear the face of death less than myself; yet from the moral duty I owe to the commandment of God, and the natural respects that I tender unto the conservation of my essence and being, I would not perish upon a ceremony,

* The suffering was, that he lost his bishopric for denying the antipodes.

politic points, or indifferency. Nor is my belief of that untractable temper, as not to bow at their obstacles, or connive at matters wherein there are not manifest impieties. The leaven therefore and ferment of all, not only civil, but religious actions, is wisdom; without which, to commit ourselves to the flames, is homicide, and, I fear, but to pass though one fire into another.

That miracles are ceased, I can neither prove, nor absolutely deny; much less define the time and period of their cessation. That they survived Christ, is manifest upon the record of Scripture; that they outlived the Apostles also, and were revived at the conversion of nations, many years after, we cannot deny, if we shall not question those writers whose testimonies we do not controvert in points that make for our own opinions. Therefore that may have some truth in it that is reported by the Jesuits of their miracles in the Indies. I could wish it were true, or had any other testimony than their own pens. They may easily believe those miracles abroad, who daily conceive a greater at home, the transmutation of those visible elements into the body and blood of our Saviour. For the conversion of water into wine, which he wrought in Cana, or, what the devil would have had him done in the wilder-

ness, of stones into bread, compared with this will scarce deserve the name of a miracle. Though indeed, to speak properly, there is not one miracle greater than another, they being the extraordinary effects of the hand of God, to which all things are of an equal facility, and to create the world as easy as one single creature. For this is also a miracle, not only to produce effects against, or above nature, but before nature; and to create nature as great a miracle, as to contradict or transcend her. We do too narrowly define the power of God, restraining it to our capacities. I hold that God can do all things. How he should work contradictions I do not understand, yet dare not therefore deny. I cannot see why the angel of God should question Esdras to recall the time past, if it were beyond his own power; or that God should pose mortality in that, which he was not able to perform himself. I will not say God cannot, but he will not perform many things, which we plainly affirm he cannot. This I am sure is the mannerliest proposition, wherein, notwithstanding, I hold no paradox. For strictly his power is the same with his will, and they both with all the rest do make but one God.

Therefore that miracles have been, I do believe; that they may yet be wrought by the

living, I do not deny; but have no confidence in those which are fathered on the dead; and this hath ever made me suspect the efficacy of relics, to examine the bones, question the habits and appurtenances of saints, and even of Christ himself. I cannot conceive why the cross that Helena found, and whereon Christ himself died, should have power to restore others to life. I excuse not Constantine from a fall off his horse, or a mischief from his enemies, upon the wearing those nails on his bridle which our Saviour bore upon the cross in his hands. I compute among "piæ fraudes," nor many degrees before consecrated swords and roses, that which Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, returned the Genovese for their cost and pains in his war, to wit, the ashes of John the Baptist. Those that hold the sanctity of their souls doth leave behind a tincture and sacred faculty on their bodies, speak naturally of miracles, and do not salve the doubt. Now one reason I tender so little devotion unto relics is, I think, the slender and doubtful respect I have always held unto antiquities. For that indeed which I admire is far before antiquity, that is, eternity; and that is God himself; who, though he be styled the ancient of days, cannot receive the adjunct of antiquity; who was before the world, and shall be after it, yet is not older than it;

for in his years there is no climacter; his duration is eternity, and far more venerable than antiquity.

But above all things I wonder how the curiosity of wiser heads could pass that great and indisputable miracle, the cessation of oracles; and in what swoon their reasons lay, to content themselves, and sit down with such a far-fetched and ridiculous reason as Plutarch allegeth for it. The Jews that can believe the supernatural solstice of the sun in the days of Joshua, have yet the impudence to deny the eclipse, which every Pagan confessed, at his death. But for this, it is evident beyond contradiction, the devil himself confessed it.* Certainly it is not a warrantable curiosity, to examine the verity of Scripture by the concordance of human history, or seek to confirm the chronicle of Esther or Daniel, by the authority of Megasthenes or Herodotus. I confess I have had an unhappy curiosity this way, till I laughed myself out of it with a piece of Justin, where he delivers that the children of Israel, for being scabbed, were banished out of Egypt.† And

* In his oracle to Augustus.

† The words of Justin are, "Sed Ægyptii, cum scabiem et vitiliginem paterentur, responso moniti, eum (sc. Moysen) cum ægris, ne pestis ad plures serperet, terminis Ægypti pellunt." Lib. 36. But he is not singular in this,

truly since I have understood the occurrences of the world, and know in what counterfeit shapes and deceitful vizards times present represent on the stage things past, I do believe them little more than things to come. Some have been of my opinion, and endeavoured to write the history of their own lives; wherein Moses hath outgone them all, and left not only the story of his life, but as some will have it, of his death also.

It is a riddle to me, how this story of oracles hath not wormed out of the world that doubtful conceit of spirits and witches; how so many learned heads should so far forget their metaphysics, and destroy the ladder and scale of creatures, as to question the existence of spirits. For my part, I have ever believed, and do now know, that there are witches. They that doubt of these do not only deny them, but spirits; and are obliquely and upon consequence a sort not of infidels, but atheists. Those that to confute their incredulity desire to see apparitions, shall questionless never behold any, nor

for Tacitus tells us, Hist. lib. 5, "Plurimi auctores consentiunt, ortâ per Ægyptum tabe, quæ corpora fœdaret, regem Bocchorim" (he means Pharaoh), "adito Hammonis oraculo, remedium petentem, purgare regnum et id genus hominum . . . . . alias in terras avehere jussum." Et paulo inferius, "Quâ ipsos scabies quondam turpaverat."

have the power to be so much as witches. The devil hath them already in a heresy as capital as witchcraft; and to appear to them, were but to convert them. Of all the delusions wherewith he deceives mortality, there is not any that puzzleth me more than the legerdemain of changelings. I do not credit those transformations of reasonable creatures into beasts, or that the devil hath a power to transpeciate a man into a horse, who tempted Christ (as a trial of his divinity) to convert but stones into bread. I could believe that spirits use with man the act of carnality, and that in both sexes; I conceive they may assume, steal, or contrive a body, wherein there may be action enough to content decrepit lust, or passion to satisfy more active veneries; yet in both, without a possibility of generation; and therefore that Antichrist should be born of the tribe of Dan, by conjunction with the devil, is ridiculous, and a conceit fitter for a Rabbin than a Christian. I hold that the devil doth really possess some men; the spirit of melancholy others; the spirit of delusion others; that as the devil is concealed and denied by some, so God and good angels are pretended by others, whereof the late defection of the maid of Germany hath left a pregnant example.

Again, I believe that all that use sorceries, incantations, and spells, are not witches, or as we term them, magicians. I conceive there is a traditional magic, not learned immediately from the devil, but at second-hand from his scholars, who having once the secret betrayed, are able, and do empirically practise without his advice, they both proceeding upon the principles of nature, where actives, aptly conjoined to disposed passives, will under any master produce their effects. Thus I think at first great part of philosophy was witchcraft, which being afterward derived to one another, proved but philosophy, and was indeed no more but the honest effects of nature. What invented by us is philosophy, learned from him is magic. We do surely owe the discovery of many secrets to the discovery of good and bad angels. I could never pass that sentence of Paracelsus, without an asterisk, or annotation; "Ascendens constellatum multa revelat quærentibus magnalia naturæ, i. e. opera Dei."* I do think that many mysteries ascribed to our own inventions, have been the courteous revelations of spirits; for those noble essences in heaven bear a friendly regard unto their fellow natures on earth; and

* Thereby is meant our good angel, appointed us from our nativity.

therefore believe that those many prodigies and ominous prognostics, which forerun the ruins of states, princes, and private persons, are the charitable premonitions of good angels, which more careless inquirers term but the effects of chance and nature.

Now besides these particular and divided spirits, there may be (for ought I know) a universal and common spirit to the whole world. It was the opinion of Plato, and it is yet of the Hermetical philosophers. If there be a common nature that unites and ties the scattered and divided individuals into one species, why may there not be one that unites them all? However, I am sure there is a common spirit that plays within us, yet makes no part in us; and that is the spirit of God, the fire and scintillation of that noble and mighty essence, which is the life and radical heat of spirits and those essences that know not the virtue of the sun, a fire quite contrary to the fire of hell. This is that gentle heat that brooded on the waters and in six days hatched the world. This is that irradiation that dispels the mists of hell, the clouds of horror, fear, sorrow, despair, and preserves the region of the mind in serenity. Whosoever feels not the warm gale and gentle ventilation of this spirit, though I feel his pulse, I dare not say he lives; for truly without this, to me

there is no heat under the tropic, nor any light, though I dwelt in the body of the sun.

As when the laboring sun hath wrought his track
Up to the top of lofty Cancer's back,
The icy ocean cracks, the frozen pole
Thaws with the heat of the celestial coal;
So when thy absent beams begin to impart
Again a solstice on my frozen heart,
My winter 's o'er; my drooping spirits sing,
And every part revives into a spring.
But if thy quickening beams awhile decline,
And with their light bless not this orb of mine,
A chilly frost surpriseth every member,
And in the midst of June I feel December.
O how this earthly temper doth debase
The noble soul, in this her humble place;
Whose wingy nature ever doth aspire
To reach that place whence first it took its fire.
These flames I feel, which in my heart do dwell,
Are not thy beams, but take their fire from hell.
O quench them all, and let thy light divine
Be as the sun to this poor orb of mine;
And to thy sacred spirit convert those fires,
Whose earthly fumes choke my devout aspires.

Therefore for spirits, I am so far from denying their existence, that I could easily believe, that not only whole countries, but particular persons have their tutelary and guardian angels. It is not a new opinion of the church of Rome, but an old one of Pythagoras and Plato. There is no heresy in it, and if not manifestly defined

in Scripture, yet is an opinion of a good and wholesome use in the course and actions of a man's life, and would serve as an hypothesis to salve many doubts, whereof common philosophy affordeth no solution. Now if you demand my opinion and metaphysics of their natures, I confess them very shallow, most of them in a negative way, like that of God; or in a comparative, between ourselves and fellow creatures; for there is in this universe a stair, or manifest scale of creatures, rising not disorderly or in confusion, but with a comely method and proportion. Between creatures of mere existence and things of life, there is a large disproportion of nature; between plants and animals, or creatures of sense, a wider difference; between them and man, a far greater; and if the proportion hold on, between man and angels there should be yet a greater. We do not comprehend their natures, who retain the first definition of Porphyry, and distinguish them from ourselves by immortality; for before his fall, 't is thought, man also was immortal; yet must we needs affirm that he had a different essence from the angels. Having therefore no certain knowledge of their natures, 't is no bad method of the schools, whatsoever perfection we find obscurely in ourselves, in a more complete and absolute way to

ascribe unto them. I believe they have an extemporary knowledge, and upon the first motion of their reason do what we cannot without study or deliberation; that they know things by their forms, and define, by specifical difference, what we describe by accidents and properties; and therefore probabilities to us may be demonstrations unto them; that they have knowledge not only of the specifical, but numerical forms of individuals, and understand by what reserved difference each single hypostasis (besides the relation to its species) becomes its numerical self; that as the soul hath a power to move the body it informs, so there 's a faculty to move any, though inform none; ours upon restraint of time, place, and distance; but that invisible hand that conveyed Habakkuk to the lions' den, or Philip to Azotus, infringeth this rule, and hath a secret conveyance, wherewith mortality is not acquainted. If they have that intuitive knowledge, whereby, as in reflection, they behold the thoughts of one another, I cannot preremptorily deny but they know a great part of ours. They that, to refute the invocation of saints, have denied that they have any knowledge of our affairs below, have proceeded too far, and must pardon my opinion till I can thoroughly answer that piece of Scripture, "At the conversion of a sinner the

angels in heaven rejoice." I cannot with those in that great Father* securely interpret the work of the first day, "Fiat lux," to the creation of angels, though I confess there is not any creature that hath so near a glimpse of their nature, as light in the sun and elements. We style it a bare accident, but where it subsists alone, 't is a spiritual substance, and may be an angel. In brief, conceive light invisible, and that is a spirit.

These are certainly the magisterial and master pieces of the Creator, the flower, or, as we may say, the best part of nothing, actually existing, what we are but in hopes and probability. We are only that amphibious piece between a corporeal and spiritual essence, that middle form that links those two together, and makes good the method of God and nature, that jumps not from extremes, but unites the incompatible distances by some middle and participating natures. That we are the breath and similitude of God, it is indisputable, and upon record of holy Scripture; but to call ourselves a microcosm, or little world, I thought it only a pleasant trope of rhetoric, till my near judgment and second thoughts told me there was a real truth therein. For first we are a rude mass,

* St. Chrysostom, Homil. in Genes.

and in the rank of creatures which only are, and have a dull kind of being not yet privileged with life, or preferred to sense or reason; next we live the life of plants, the life of animals, the life of men, and at last the life of spirits; running on in one mysterious nature those five kinds of existences, which comprehend the creatures not only of the world, but of the universe. Thus is man that great and true amphibium, whose nature is disposed to live not only like other creatures in divers elements, but in divided and distinguished worlds. For though there be but one to sense, there are two to reason; the one visible, the other invisible, whereof Moses seems to have left description, and of the other so obscurely, that some parts thereof are yet in controversy. And truly for the first chapter of Genesis, I must confess a great deal of obscurity; though divines have, to the power of human reason, endeavoured to make all go in a literal meaning, yet those allegorical interpretations are also probable, and perhaps the mystical method of Moses bred up in the hieroglyphical schools of the Egyptians.

Now for that immaterial world, methinks we need not wander so far as beyond the first movable; for even in this material fabric the spirits walk as freely exempt from the affection of time, place, and motion, as beyond the ex-

tremest circumference. Do but extract from the corpulency of bodies, or resolve things beyond their first matter, and you discover the habitation of angels, which if I call the ubiquitary and omnipresent essence of God, I hope I shall not offend divinity; for before the creation of the world, God was really all things. For the angels he created no new world or determinate mansion, and therefore they are everywhere where is his essence, and do live at a distance even in himself. That God made all things for man, is in some sense true, yet not so far as to subordinate the creation of those purer creatures unto ours, though as ministering spirits they do, and are willing to fulfil the will of God in these lower and sublunary affairs of man. God made all things for himself, and it is impossible he should make them for any other end than his own glory. It is all he can receive, and all that is without himself. For honor being an external adjunct, and in the honorer rather than in the person honored, it was necessary to make a creature, from whom he might receive his homage, and that is in the other world angels, in this, man; which when we neglect, we forget the very end of our creation, and may justly provoke God, not only to repent that he hath made the world, but that he hath sworn he would not destroy it. That

there is but one world, is a conclusion of faith. Aristotle, with all his philosophy, hath not been able to prove it, and as weakly that the world was eternal. That dispute much troubled the pen of the ancient philosophers, but Moses decided that question, and all is salved with the new term of a creation, that is, a production of something out of nothing; and what is that? Whatsoever is opposite to something; or more exactly, that which is truly contrary unto God. For he only is; all others have an existence with dependency, and are something but by a distinction; and herein is divinity conformant unto philosophy, and generation not only founded on contrarieties, but also creation. God being all things, is contrary unto nothing, out of which were made all things, and so nothing became something, and omniety informed nullity into an essence.

The whole creation is a mystery, and particularly that of man. At the blast of his mouth were the rest of the creatures made, and at his bare word they started out of nothing. But in the frame of man (as the text describes it) he played the sensible operator, and seemed not so much to create, as make him. When he had separated the materials of other creatures, there consequently resulted a form and soul; but having raised the walls of man, he was driven to a second and harder creation of a

substance like himself, an incorruptible and immortal soul. For these two affections we have the philosophy and opinion of the heathens, the flat affirmative of Plato, and not a negative from Aristotle. There is another scruple cast in by divinity (concerning its production) much disputed in the German auditories, and with that indifferency and equality of arguments, as leave the controversy undetermined. I am not of Paracelsus's mind, that boldly delivers a receipt to make a man without conjunction; yet cannot but wonder at the multitude of heads that do deny traduction, having no other argument to confirm their belief, than that rhetorical sentence and antimetathesis of Augustine, "Creando infunditur, infundendo creatur." Either opinion will consist well enough with religion; yet I should rather incline to this, did not one objection haunt me, not wrung from speculations and subtilties, but from common sense and observation; not picked from the leaves of any author, but bred amongst the weeds and tares of mine own brain. And this is a conclusion from the equivocal and monstrous productions in the copulation of a man with a beast; for if the soul of man be not transmitted and transfused in the seed of the parents, why are not those productions merely beasts, but have also an impression and tincture

of reason in as high a measure, as it can evidence itself in those improper organs? Nor truly can I peremptorily deny, that the soul, in this her sublunary estate, is wholly and in all acceptions inorganical, but that for the performance of her ordinary actions, there is required not only a symmetry and proper disposition of organs, but a crasis and temper correspondent to its operations. Yet is not this mass of flesh and visible structure the instrument and proper corps of the soul, but rather of sense, and that the hand of reason. In our study of anatomy there is a mass of mysterious philosophy, and such as reduced the very heathens to divinity; yet amongst all those rare discoveries and curious pieces I find in the fabric of man, I do not so much content myself, as in that I find not, that is, no organ or instrument for the rational soul. For in the brain, which we term the seat of reason, there is not any thing of moment more than I can discover in the crany of a beast; and this is a sensible and no inconsiderable argument of the inorganity of the soul, at least in that sense we usually so conceive it. Thus we are men, and we know not how; there is something in us that can be without us, and will be after us, though it is strange that it hath no history what it was before us, nor cannot tell how it entered in us.

Now for these walls of flesh, wherein the soul doth seem to be immured before the resurrection, it is nothing but an elemental composition, and a fabric that must fall to ashes. "All flesh is grass," is not only metaphorically, but literally true; for all those creatures we behold, are but the herbs of the field, digested into flesh in them, or more remotely carnified in ourselves. Nay further, we are what we all abhor, anthropophagi and cannibals, devourers not only of men, but of ourselves; and that not in an allegory, but a positive truth. For all this mass of flesh which we behold, came in at our mouths; this frame we look upon, hath been upon our trenchers; in brief, we have devoured ourselves. I cannot believe the wisdom of Pythagoras did ever positively, and in a literal sense, affirm his metempsychosis, or impossible transmigration of the souls of men into beasts. Of all metamorphoses, or transmigrations, I believe only one, that is of Lot's wife; for that of Nebuchedonezzar proceeded not so far. In all others, I conceive there is no further verity than is contained in their implicit sense and morality. I believe that the whole frame of a beast doth perish, and is left in the same state after death, as before it was materialled unto life; that the souls of men know neither contrary nor corruption; that they subsist beyond the body and outlive

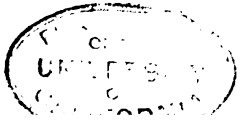
death by the privilege of their proper natures, and without a miracle; that the souls of the faithful, as they leave earth, take possession of heaven; that those apparitions and ghosts of departed persons are not the wandering souls of men, but the unquiet walks of devils, prompting and suggesting us unto mischief, blood, and villany, instilling and stealing into our hearts, that the blessed spirits are not at rest in their graves, but wander solicitous of the affairs of the world. But that those phantasms appear often, and do frequent cemeteries, charnel-houses, and churches, it is because those are the dormitories of the dead, where the devil, like an insolent champion, beholds with pride the spoils and trophies of his victory over Adam.

This is that dismal conquest we all deplore, that makes us so often cry, "O Adam, quid fecisti?" I thank God I have not those strait ligaments or narrow obligations to the world, as to dote on life, or be convulsed and tremble at the name of death. Not that I am insensible of the dread and horror thereof, or by raking into the bowels of the deceased, continual sight of anatomies, skeletons, or cadaverous relics, like vespillones, or grave-makers, I am become stupid, or have forgot the apprehension of mortality; but that marshalling all the horrors, and

contemplating the extremities thereof, I find not any thing therein able to daunt the courage of a man, much less a well resolved Christian; and therefore am not angry at the error of our first parents, or unwilling to bear a part of this common fate, and like the best of them to die, that is, to cease to breathe, to take a farewell of the elements, to be a kind of nothing for a moment, to be within one instant of a spirit. When I take a full view and circle of myself, without this reasonable moderator, and equal piece of justice, death, I do conceive myself the miserablest person extant. Were there not another life that I hope for, all the vanities of this world should not entreat a moment's breath from me. Could the devil work my belief to imagine I could never die, I would not outlive that very thought. I have so abject a conceit of this common way of existence, this retaining to the sun and elements, I cannot think this is to be a man, or to live according to the dignity of humanity. In expectation of a better, I can with patience embrace this life, yet in my best meditations do often defy death. I honor any man that contemns it, nor can I highly love any man that is afraid of it. This makes me naturally love a soldier, and honor those tattered and contemptible regiments, that will die at the command of a sergeant. For a Pagan there

may be some motives to be in love with life; but for a Christian to be amazed at death, I see not how he can escape this dilemma, that he is too sensible of this life, or hopeless of the life to come.

Some divines count Adam thirty years old at his creation, because they suppose him created in the perfect age and stature of man. And surely we are all out of the computation of our age, and every man is some months elder than he bethinks him; for we live, move, have a being, and are subject to the actions of the elements and the malice of diseases, in that other world, the truest microcosm, the womb of our mother. For besides that general and common existence we are conceived to hold in our chaos, and whilst we sleep within the bosom of our causes, we enjoy a being and life in three distinct worlds, wherein we receive most manifest graduations. In that obscure world and womb of our mother, our time is short, computed by the moon; yet longer than the days of many creatures that behold the sun, ourselves being not yet without life, sense, and reason; though for the manifestation of its actions, it awaits the opportunity of objects, and seems to live there but in its root and soul of vegetation. Entering afterwards upon the scene of the world, we rise up and become another creature, perform-



ing the reasonable actions of man, and obscurely manifesting that part of divinity in us, but not in complement and perfection till we have once more cast our secondine, that is, this slough of flesh, and are delivered into the last world, that is, that ineffable place of Paul, that proper "ubi" of spirits. The smattering I have of the philosopher's stone (which is something more than the perfect exaltation of gold) hath taught me a great deal of divinity, and instructed my belief how that immortal spirit and incorruptible substance of my soul may lie obscure, and sleep awhile within this house of flesh. Those strange and mystical transmigrations that I have observed in silkworms, turned my philosophy into divinity. There is in these works of nature, which seem to puzzle reason, something divine, and hath more in it than the eye of a common spectator doth discover.

I am naturally bashful, nor hath conversation, age, or travel, been able to effront or enharden me; yet I have one part of modesty which I have seldom discovered in another, that is, (to speak truly) I am not so much afraid of death as ashamed thereof. 'T is the very disgrace and ignominy of our natures, that in a moment can so disfigure us that our nearest friends, wife and children, stand afraid and start at us. The birds and beasts of the field, that before in a

natural fear obeyed us, forgetting all allegiance, begin to prey upon us. This very conceit hath, in a tempest, disposed and left me willing to be swallowed up in the abyss of waters; wherein I had perished unseen, unpitied, without wondering eyes, tears of pity, lectures of mortality, and none had said, "Quantum mutatus ab illo!" Not that I am ashamed of the anatomy of my parts, or can accuse nature for playing the bungler in any part of me, or my own vicious life for contracting any shameful disease upon me, whereby I might not call myself as wholesome a morsel for the worms as any.

Some upon the courage of a fruitful issue, wherein, as in the truest chronicle, they seem to outlive themselves, can with patience away with death. This conceit and counterfeit subsisting in our progenies, seems to me a mere fallacy, unworthy the desires of a man, that can but conceive a thought of the next world; who, in a nobler ambition, should desire to live in his substance in heaven, rather than his name and shadow in the earth. And therefore at my death I mean to take a total adieu of the world, not caring for a monument, history, or epitaph, not so much as the memory of my name to be found any where, but in the universal register of God. I am not yet so cynical as to approve the testament of Dioge-

nes,* nor do I altogether allow that rodomontado of Lucan;

—— Cœlo tegitur, qui non habet urnam;

He that unburied lies wants not his hearse,
For unto him a tomb 's the universe;

but commend in my calmer judgments, those ingenuous intentions, that desire to sleep by the urns of their fathers, and strive to go the nearest way unto corruption. I do not envy the temper of crows and daws,† nor the numerous and weary days of our fathers before the flood. If there be any truth in astrology, I may outlive a jubilee. As yet I have not seen one revolution of Saturn, nor hath my pulse beat thirty years; and yet, excepting one, have seen the ashes, and left under ground, all the kings of Europe; have been contemporary to three emperors, four grand seigniors, and as many popes. Methinks I have outlived myself, and begin to be weary of the sun; I have shaken hands with delight. In my warm blood and canicular days I perceive I do anticipate the vices of age; the

* Who willed his friend not to bury him, but hang him up with a staff in his hand to fright away the crows.

† As Theophrastus did, who dying, accused nature for giving them, to whom it could not be of any concernment, so large a life; and to man, whom it much concerned, so short a one. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst.* lib. 3.

world to me is but a dream or mock-show, and we all therein but pantalones and antics, to my severer contemplations.

It is not, I confess, an unlawful prayer to desire to surpass the days of our Saviour, or wish to outlive that age wherein he thought fittest to die. Yet if (as divinity affirms) there shall be no gray hairs in heaven, but all shall rise in the perfect state of men, we do but outlive those perfections in this world, to be recalled unto them by a greater miracle in the next, and run on here but to be retrograde hereafter. Were there any hopes to outlive vice, or a point to be superannuated from sin, it were worthy our knees to implore the days of Methuselah. But age doth not rectify, but incurvate our natures, turning bad dispositions into worser habits, and (like diseases) brings on incurable vices; for every day as we grow weaker in age, we grow stronger in sin; and the number of our days doth but make our sins innumerable. The same vice committed at sixteen, is not the same, though it agrees in all other circumstances, as at forty, but swells and doubles from that circumstance of our age, wherein, besides the constant and inexcusable habit of transgressing, the maturity of our judgment cuts off pretence unto excuse or pardon. Every sin, the oftener it is committed, the

more it acquireth in the quality of evil; as it succeeds in time, so it proceeds in degrees of badness; for as they proceed, they ever multiply, and like figures in arithmetic, the last stands for more than all that went before it. And though I think no man can live well once, but he that could live twice, yet for my own part I would not live over my hours past, or begin again the thread of my days; not upon Cicero's ground, because I have lived them well, but for fear I should live them worse. I find my growing judgment daily instruct me how to be better, but my untamed affections and confirmed vitiosity makes me daily do worse. I find in my confirmed age the same sins I discovered in my youth. I committed many then, because I was a child, and because I commit them still, I am yet an infant. Therefore I perceive a man may be twice a child before the days of dotage, and stand in need of Æson's bath before threescore.*

And truly there goes a great deal of providence to produce a man's life unto threescore. There is more required than an able temper for those years. Though the radical humor contain

* Æson was the son of Jason, and, at his request, was by Medea, by the means of this bath, restored to his youth. Ingredients that went into it, and the description of Medea's performance, Ovid gives you, lib. 7, Metam.

in it sufficient oil for seventy, yet I perceive in some it gives no light past thirty. Men assign not all the causes of long life that write whole books thereof. They that found themselves on the radical balsam, or vital sulphur of the parts, determine not why Abel lived not so long as Adam. There is therefore a secret glome or bottom of our days. 'T was his wisdom to determine them, but his perpetual and waking providence that fulfils and accomplisheth them, wherein the spirits, ourselves, and all the creatures of God, in a secret and disputed way, do execute his will. Let them not therefore complain of immaturity that die about thirty. They fall but like the whole world, whose solid and well composed substance must not expect the duration and period of its constitution. When all things are completed in it, its age is accomplished; and the last and general fever may as naturally destroy it before six thousand, as me before forty. There is therefore some other hand that twines the thread of life than that of nature. We are not only ignorant in antipathies and occult qualities; our ends are as obscure as our beginnings; the line of our days is drawn by night, and the various effects therein by a pencil that is invisible; wherein, though we confess our ignorance, I am sure we do not err if we say it is the hand of God.

I am much taken with two verses of Lucan, since I have been able not only, as we do at school, to construe, but understand.

> Victurosque Dei celant, ut vivere durent,
> Felix esse mori.
>
> We 're all deluded, vainly searching ways
> To make us happy by the length of days;
> For cunningly to make 's protract this breath,
> The gods conceal the happiness of death.

There be many excellent strains in that poet, wherewith his stoical genius hath liberally supplied him; and truly there are singular pieces in the philosophy of Zeno, and doctrine of the Stoics, which I perceive, delivered in a pulpit, pass for current divinity. Yet herein are they in extremes, that can allow a man to be his own assassin, and so highly extol the end and suicide of Cato. This is indeed not to fear death, but yet to be afraid of life. It is a brave act of valor to contemn death; but where life is more terrible than death, it is then the truest valor to dare to live; and herein religion hath taught us a noble example. For all the valiant acts of Curtius, Scævola, or Codrus, do not parallel or match that one of Job; and sure there is no torture to the rack of a disease, nor any poniards in death itself, like those in the way or prologue to it. "Emori nolo, sed me esse mortuum nihil curo;" I would not die, but

care not to be dead. Were I of Cæsar's religion, I should be of his desires, and wish rather to go off at one blow, than to be sawed in pieces by the grating torture of a disease. Men that look no farther than their outsides, think health an appurtenance unto life, and quarrel with their constitutions for being sick; but I, that have examined the parts of man, and know upon what tender filaments the fabric hangs, do wonder that we are not always so; and considering the thousand doors that lead to death, do thank my God that we can die but once. 'T is not only the mischief of diseases, and the villany of poisons, that make an end of us; we vainly accuse the fury of guns, and the new inventions of death; it is in the power of every hand to destroy us, and we are beholden unto every one we meet, he doth not kill us. There is therefore but one comfort left, that though it be in the power of the weakest arm to take away life, it is not in the strongest to deprive us of death. God would not exempt himself from that; the misery of immortality in the flesh he undertook not that was immortal. Certainly there is no happiness within this circle of flesh, nor is it in the optics of these eyes to behold felicity; the first day of our jubilee is death. The devil hath therefore failed of his desires; we are happier with death than we should have

been without it. There is no misery but in himself, where there is no end of misery; and so indeed, in his own sense, the Stoic is in the right. He forgets that he can die who complains of misery; we are in the power of no calamity while death is in our own.

Now besides this literal and positive kind of death, there are others whereof divines make mention, and those, I think, not merely metaphorical, as mortification, dying unto sin and the world. Therefore, I say, every man hath a double horoscope, one of his humanity, his birth; another of his Christianity, his baptism; and from this do I compute or calculate my nativity; not reckoning those "horæ combustæ" and odd days, or esteeming myself any thing, before I was my Saviour's, and enrolled in the register of Christ. Whosoever enjoys not this life, I count him but an apparition, though he wear about him the sensible affections of flesh. In these moral acceptions, the way to be immortal is to die daily; nor can I think I have the true theory of death, when I contemplate a skull, or behold a skeleton, with those vulgar imaginations it casts upon us. I have therefore enlarged that common "Memento mori," into a more Christian memorandum, "Memento quatuor novissima," those four inevitable points of us all, death, judgment, hea-

ven, and hell. Neither did the contemplations of the heathens rest in their graves, without further thought of Rhadamanth or some judicial proceeding after death, though in another way, and upon suggestion of their natural reasons. I cannot but marvel from what sibyl or oracle they stole the prophecy of the world's destruction by fire, or whence Lucan learned to say,

> Communis mundo superest rogus, ossibus astra
> Misturus. ———
>
> There yet remains to the world one common fire,
> Wherein our bones with stars shall make one pyre.

I believe the world grows near its end, yet is neither old nor decayed, nor shall ever perish upon the ruins of its own principles. As the work of creation was above nature, so its adversary, annihilation; without which the world hath not its end, but its mutation. Now what force should be able to consume it thus far, without the breath of God, which is the truest consuming flame, my philosophy cannot inform me. Some believe there went not a minute to the world's creation, nor shall there go to its destruction; those six days so punctually described, make not to them one moment, but rather seem to manifest the method and idea of the great work of the intellect of God, than

the manner how he proceeded in its operation. I cannot dream that there should be at the last day any such judicial proceeding, or calling to the bar, as indeed the Scripture seems to imply, and the literal commentators do conceive. For unspeakable mysteries in the Scriptures are often delivered in a vulgar and illustrative way; and being written unto man, are delivered, not as they truly are, but as they may be understood; wherein, notwithstanding, the different interpretations according to different capacities may stand firm with our devotion, nor be any way prejudicial to each single edification.

Now to determine the day and year of this inevitable time, is not only convincible and statute madness, but also manifest impiety. How shall we interpret Elias's six thousand years, or imagine the secret communicated to a Rabbi, which God hath denied unto his angels? It had been an excellent query to have posed the devil of Delphos, and must needs have forced him to some strange amphibology. It hath not only mocked the predictions of sundry astrologers in ages past, but the prophecies of many melancholy heads in these present; who neither understanding reasonably things past or present, pretend a knowledge of things to come; heads ordained only to manifest the incredible effects of melancholy, and to fulfil

old prophecies, rather than be the authors of new. "In those days there shall come wars, and rumors of wars," to me seems no prophecy, but a constant truth, in all times verified since it was pronounced. "There shall be signs in the moon and stars;" how comes he then like a thief in the night, when he gives an item of his coming? That common sign drawn from the revelation of Antichrist, is as obscure as any. In our common compute he hath been come these many years. But for my own part, to speak freely, I am half of opinion that Antichrist is the philosopher's stone in divinity; for the discovery and invention whereof, though there be prescribed rules, and probable inductions, yet hath hardly any man attained the perfect discovery thereof. That general opinion that the world grows near its end, hath possessed all ages past as nearly as ours. I am afraid that the souls that now depart, cannot escape that lingering expostulation of the saints under the altar, "Quousque, Domine?" "How long, O Lord?" and groan in the expectation of the great jubilee.

This is the day that must make good that great attribute of God, his justice; that must reconcile those unanswerable doubts that torment the wisest understandings, and reduce those seeming inequalities and respective dis-

tributions in this world, to an equality and recompensive justice in the next. This is that one day, that shall include and comprehend all that went before it, wherein, as in the last scene, all the actors must enter to complete and make up the catastrophe of this great piece. This is the day whose memory hath only power to make us honest in the dark, and to be virtuous without a witness. "Ipsa sui pretium virtus sibi," that "virtue is her own reward," is but a cold principle, and not able to maintain our variable resolutions in a constant and settled way of goodness. I have practised that honest artifice of Seneca, and in my retired and solitary imaginations, to detain me from the foulness of vice, have fancied to myself the presence of my dear and worthiest friends, before whom I should lose my head rather than be vicious; yet herein I found that there was nought but moral honesty, and this was not to be virtuous for his sake who must reward us at the last. I have tried if I could reach that great resolution of his, to be honest without a thought of heaven or hell; and indeed I found, upon a natural inclination and inbred loyalty unto virtue, that I could serve her without a livery, yet not in that resolved and venerable way, but that the frailty of my nature, upon an easy temptation, might be induced to forget her.

The life therefore and spirit of all our actions is the resurrection, and a stable apprehension that our ashes shall enjoy the fruit of our pious endeavours. Without this, all religion is a fallacy, and those impieties of Lucian, Euripides, and Julian are no blasphemies, but subtle verities, and atheists have been the only philosophers.

How shall the dead arise, is no question of my faith; to believe only possibilities, is not faith, but mere philosophy. Many things are true in divinity, which are neither inducible by reason, nor confirmable by sense; and many things in philosophy confirmable by sense, yet not inducible by reason. Thus it is impossible by any solid or demonstrative reasons to persuade a man to believe the conversion of the needle to the north; though this be possible, and true, and easily credible, upon a single experiment unto the sense. I believe that our estranged and divided ashes shall unite again, that our separated dust, after so many pilgrimages and transformations into the parts of minerals, plants, animals, elements, shall at the voice of God return into their primitive shapes, and join again to make up their primary and predestinate forms. As at the creation, there was a separation of that confused mass into its species, so at the destruction thereof there shall be a separation into its distinct individuals.

As, at the creation of the world, all the distinct species that we behold, lay involved in one mass, till the fruitful voice of God separated this united multitude into its several species; so at the last day, when those corrupted relics shall be scattered in the wilderness of forms, and seem to have forgot their proper habits, God by a powerful voice shall command them back into their proper shapes, and call them out by their single individuals. Then shall appear the fertility of Adam, and the magic of that sperm that hath dilated into so many millions. I have often beheld as a miracle, that artificial resurrection and revivification of mercury, how being mortified into a thousand shapes, it assumes again its own, and returns into its numerical self. Let us speak naturally, and like philosophers; the forms of alterable bodies in these sensible corruptions perish not, nor, as we imagine, wholly quit their mansions, but retire and contract themselves into their secret and unaccessible parts, where they may best protect themselves from the action of their antagonist. A plant or vegetable consumed to ashes, to a contemplative and school philosopher, seems utterly destroyed, and the form to have taken his leave for ever. But to a sensible artist the forms are not perished, but withdrawn into their incombustible part, where they

lie secure from the action of that devouring element. This is made good by experience, which can from the ashes of a plant revive the plant, and from its cinders recall it into its stalk and leaves again. What the art of man can do in these inferior pieces, what blasphemy is it to affirm the finger of God cannot do in these more perfect and sensible structures! This is that mystical philosophy, from whence no true scholar becomes an atheist, but from the visible effects of nature grows up a real divine, and beholds not in a dream, as Ezekiel, but in an ocular and visible object, the types of his resurrection.

Now, the necessary mansions of our restored selves are those two contrary and incompatible places we call heaven and hell. To define them, or strictly to determine what and where these are, surpass my divinity. That elegant Apostle, which seemed to have a glimpse of heaven, has left but a negative description thereof — "which neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor can enter into the heart of man." He was translated out of himself to behold it, but being returned into himself could not express it. Saint John's description by emeralds, chrysolites, and precious stones, is too weak to express the material heaven we behold. Briefly therefore, where the soul hath

the full measure and complement of happiness, where the boundless appetite of that spirit remains completely satisfied, that it can neither desire addition nor alteration, that I think is truly heaven; and this can only be in the enjoyment of that essence, whose infinite goodness is able to terminate the desires of itself and the unsatiable wishes of ours. Wherever God will thus manifest himself, there is heaven, though within the circle of this sensible world. Thus the soul of man may be in heaven anywhere, even within the limits of his own proper body; and when it ceaseth to live in the body, it may remain in its own soul, that is, its Creator. And thus we may say that Saint Paul, whether in the body, or out of the body, was yet in heaven. To place it in the empyreal, or beyond the tenth sphere, is to forget the world's destruction; for when this sensible world shall be destroyed, all shall then be here as it is now there, an empyreal heaven, a quasi vacuity; when to ask where heaven is, is to demand where the presence of God is, or where we have the glory of that happy vision. Moses, that was bred up in all the learning of the Egyptians, committed a gross absurdity in philosophy, when with these eyes of flesh he desired to see God, and petitioned his Maker, that is truth itself, to a contradiction. Those that imagine

heaven and hell neighbours, and conceive a vicinity between those two extremes, upon consequence of the parable, where Dives discoursed with Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, do too grossly conceive of those glorified creatures, whose eyes shall easily outsee the sun, and behold without a perspective the extremest distances. For if there shall be in our glorified eyes the faculty of sight and reception of objects, I could think the visible species there to be in as unlimitable a way, as now the intellectual. I grant that two bodies placed beyond the tenth sphere, or in a vacuity according to Aristotle's philosophy, could not behold each other, because there wants a body or medium to hand and transport the visible rays of the object unto the sense. But when there shall be a general defect of either medium to convey, or light to prepare and dispose that medium, and yet a perfect vision, we must suspend the rules of our philosophy, and make all good by a more absolute piece of optics.

I cannot tell how to say that fire is the essence of hell; I know not what to make of purgatory, or conceive a flame that can either prey upon or purify the substance of a soul. Those flames of sulphur mentioned in the Scriptures, I take not to be understood of this present hell, but of that to come, where fire shall

make up the complement of our tortures, and have a body or subject wherein to manifest its tyranny. Some who have had the honor to be textuary in divinity, are of opinion it shall be the same specifical fire with ours. This is hard to conceive; yet can I make good how even that may prey upon our bodies, and yet not consume us. For in this material world, there are bodies that persist invincible in the powerfullest flames, and though by the action of fire they fall into ignition and liquation, yet will they never suffer a destruction. I would gladly know how Moses with an actual fire calcined, or burnt the golden calf unto powder. For that mystical metal of gold, whose solary and celestial nature I admire, exposed unto the violence of fire, grows only hot and liquefies, but consumeth not. So when the consumable and volatile pieces of our bodies shall be refined into a more impregnable and fixed temper, like gold, though they suffer from the action of flames, they shall never perish, but lie immortal in the arms of fire. And surely if this frame must suffer only by the action of this element, there will many bodies escape, and not only heaven, but earth will not be at an end, but rather a beginning. For at present it is not earth, but a composition of fire, water, earth, and air; but at that time, spoiled of these

ingredients, it shall appear in a substance more like itself, its ashes. Philosophers that opinioned the world's destruction by fire, did never dream of annihilation, which is beyond the power of sublunary causes; for the last and proper action of that element is but vitrification, or a reduction of a body into glass; and therefore some of our chemists facetiously affirm, that at the last fire all shall be crystallized and reverberated into glass, which is the utmost action of that element. Nor need we fear this term annihilation, or wonder that God will destroy the works of his creation; for man subsisting, who is, and will then truly appear a microcosm, the world cannot be said to be destroyed. For the eyes of God, and perhaps also of our glorified selves, shall as really behold and contemplate the world in its epitome or contracted essence, as now it doth at large and in its dilated substance. In the seed of a plant, to the eyes of God, and to the understanding of man, there exists, though in an invisible way, the perfect leaves, flowers, and fruit thereof; (for things that are in posse to the sense, are actually existent to the understanding.) Thus God beholds all things, who contemplates as fully his works in their epitome, as in their full volume, and beheld as amply the whole world in that little compen-

dium of the sixth day, as in the scattered and dilated pieces of those five before.

Men commonly set forth the torments of hell by fire and the extremity of corporal afflictions, and describe hell in the same method that Mahomet doth heaven. This indeed makes a noise, and drums in popular ears. But if this be the terrible piece thereof, it is not worthy to stand in diameter with heaven, whose happiness consists in that part that is best able to comprehend it, that immortal essence, that translated divinity and colony of God, the soul. Surely, though we place hell under earth, the devil's walk and purlieu is about it. Men speak too popularly who place it in those flaming mountains, which to grosser apprehensions represent hell. The heart of man is the place the devils dwell in. I feel sometimes a hell within myself; Lucifer keeps his court in my breast; Legion is revived in me. There are as many hells, as Anaxagoras conceited worlds. There was more than one hell in Magdalene, when there were seven devils; for every devil is an hell unto himself; he holds enough of torture in his own "ubi," and needs not the misery of circumference to afflict him. And thus a distracted conscience here, is a shadow or introduction unto hell hereafter. Who can but pity the merciful intention of those hands

that do destroy themselves? The devil, were it in his power, would do the like; which being impossible, his miseries are endless, and he suffers most in that attribute wherein he is impassible, his immortality.

I thank God, and with joy I mention it, I was never afraid of hell, nor never grew pale at the description of that place. I have so fixed my contemplations on heaven, that I have almost forgot the idea of hell, and am afraid rather to lose the joys of the one, than endure the misery of the other. To be deprived of them is a perfect hell, and needs, methinks, no addition to complete our afflictions. That terrible term hath never detained me from sin, nor do I owe any good action to the name thereof. I fear God, yet am not afraid of him; his mercies make me ashamed of my sins, before his judgments afraid thereof. These are the forced and secondary method of his wisdom, which he useth but as the last remedy, and upon provocation; a course rather to deter the wicked, than incite the virtuous to his worship. I can hardly think there was ever any scared into heaven. They go the fairest way to heaven, that would serve God without a hell. Other mercenaries, that crouch unto him in fear of hell, though they term themselves the servants, are indeed but the slaves of the Almighty.

And to be true, and speak my soul, when I survey the occurrences of my life and call into account the finger of God, I can perceive nothing but an abyss and mass of mercies, either in general to mankind, or in particular to myself. And whether out of the prejudice of my affection, or an inverting and partial conceit of his mercies, I know not, but those which others term crosses, afflictions, judgments, misfortunes, to me, who inquire further into them than their visible effects, they both appear and in event have ever proved the secret and dissembled favors of his affection. It is a singular piece of wisdom to apprehend truly, and without passion, the works of God, and so well to distinguish his justice from his mercy, as not miscall those noble attributes. Yet it is likewise an honest piece of logic, so to dispute and argue the proceedings of God, as to distinguish even his judgments into mercies. For God is merciful unto all, because better to the worst, than the best deserve; and to say he punisheth none in this world, though it be a paradox, is no absurdity. To one that hath committed murder, if the judge should only ordain a fine, it were a madness to call this a punishment, and to repine at the sentence, rather than admire the clemency of the judge. Thus our offences being mortal, and deserving not only death,

but damnation, if the goodness of God be content to traverse and pass them over with a loss, misfortune, or disease, what frenzy were it to term this a punishment, rather than an extremity of mercy, and to groan under the rod of his judgments, rather than admire the sceptre of his mercies. Therefore to adore, honor, and admire him, is a debt of gratitude due from the obligation of our nature, states, and conditions; and with these thoughts, he that knows them best, will not deny that I adore him. That I obtain heaven and the bliss thereof, is accidental, and not the intended work of my devotion; it being a felicity I can neither think to deserve, nor scarce in modesty to expect. For those two ends of us all, either as rewards or punishments, are mercifully ordained, and disproportionably disposed unto our actions; the one being so far beyond our deserts, the other so infinitely below our demerits.

There is no salvation to those that believe not in Christ, that is, say some, since his nativity, and as divinity affirmeth, before also; which makes me much apprehend the end of those honest worthies and philosophers, which died before his incarnation. It is hard to place those souls in hell whose worthy lives do teach us virtue on earth. Methinks amongst those many subdivisions of hell, there might have

been one limbo left for these. What a strange vision will it be to see their poetical fictions converted into verities, and their imagined and fancied furies, into real devils. How strange to them will sound the history of Adam, when they shall suffer for him they never heard of; when they who derive their genealogy from the gods, shall know they are the unhappy issue of sinful man. It is an insolent part of reason, to controvert the works of God, or question the justice of his proceedings. Could humility teach others, as it hath instructed me, to contemplate the infinite and incomprehensible distance betwixt the Creator and the creature; or did we seriously perpend that one simile of St. Paul, "Shall the vessel say to the potter, why hast thou made me thus?" it would prevent these arrogant disputes of reason, nor would we argue the definitive sentence of God, either to heaven or hell. Men that live according to the right rule and law of reason, live but in their own kind, as beasts do in theirs; who justly obey the prescript of their natures, and therefore cannot reasonably demand a reward of their actions, as only obeying the natural dictates of their reason. It will therefore, and must at last appear, that all salvation is through Christ; which verity I fear these great examples of virtue must confirm, and make it good

how the perfectest actions of earth have no title or claim to heaven.

Nor truly do I think the lives of these or of any other were ever correspondent, or in all points conformable unto their doctrines. It is evident that Aristotle transgressed the rule of his own Ethics. The Stoics, that condemn passion, and command a man to laugh in Phalaris his bull, could not endure without a groan a fit of the stone or colic. The Skeptics, that affirmed they knew nothing, even in that opinion confute themselves; and thought they knew more than all the world besides. Diogenes I hold to be the most vainglorious man of his time, and more ambitious in refusing all honors, than Alexander in rejecting none. Vice and the devil put a fallacy upon our reasons, and provoking us too hastily to run from it, entangle and profound us deeper in it. The Duke of Venice, that weds himself unto the sea by a ring of gold, I will not argue of prodigality, because it is a solemnity of good use and consequence in the state; but the philosopher that threw his money into the sea to avoid avarice, was a notorious prodigal. There is no road or ready way to virtue; it is not an easy point of art to disentangle ourselves from this riddle or web of sin. To perfect virtue, as to religion, there is required a panoplia, or

complete armour, that whilst we lie at close ward against one vice, we lie not open to the veney of another; and indeed wiser discretions that have the thread of reason to conduct them, offend without pardon; whereas, underheads may stumble without dishonor. There go so many circumstances to piece up one good action, that it is a lesson to be good, and we are forced to be virtuous by the book. Again, the practice of men holds not an equal pace, yea, and often runs counter to their theory; we naturally know what is good, but naturally pursue what is evil. The rhetoric wherewith I persuade another cannot persuade myself. There is a depraved appetite in us, that will with patience hear the learned instructions of reason, but yet perform no farther than agrees to its own irregular humor. In brief, we are all monsters, that is, a composition of man and beast; wherein we must endeavour to be as the poets fancy that wise man Chiron, that is, to have the region of man above that of beast, and sense to sit but at the feet of reason. Lastly, I do desire with God, that all, but yet affirm with men, that few shall know salvation; that the bridge is narrow, the passage strait unto life. Yet those who do confine the church of God, either to particular nations, churches, or families, have made it narrower than our Saviour ever meant it.

The vulgarity of those judgments that wrap the church of God in Strabo's cloak and restrain it unto Europe, seem to me as bad geographers as Alexander, who thought he had conquered all the world, when he had not subdued the half of any part thereof. For we cannot deny the church of God both in Asia and Africa, if we do not forget the peregrinations of the Apostles, the deaths of the martyrs, the sessions of many and, even in our reformed judgment, lawful councils, held in those parts in the minority and nonage of ours. Nor must a few differences, more remarkable in the eyes of man than perhaps in the judgment of God, excommunicate from heaven one another, much less those Christians who are in a manner all martyrs, maintaining their faith in the noble way of persecution, and serving God in the fire, whereas we honor him in the sunshine. 'T is true we all hold there is a number of elect, and many to be saved; yet take our opinions together, and from the confusion thereof there will be no such thing as salvation, nor shall any one be saved; for first the Church of Rome condemneth us, we likewise them; the Sub-reformists and sectaries sentence the doctrine of our church as damnable; the Atomist, or Familist, reprobates all these, and all these them again. Thus whilst the mercies of God do

promise us heaven, our conceits and opinions exclude us from that place. There must be therefore more than one Saint Peter. Particular churches and sects usurp the gates of heaven, and turn the key against each other; and thus we go to heaven against each other's wills, conceits, and opinions, and, with as much uncharity as ignorance, do err, I fear, in points not only of our own, but one another's salvation.

I believe many are saved, who to man seem reprobated, and many are reprobated, who in the opinion and sentence of man stand elected. There will appear, at the last day, strange and unexpected examples, both of his justice and his mercy, and therefore to define either is folly in man, and insolency even in the devils. Those acute and subtile spirits, in all their sagacity, can hardly divine who shall be saved; which if they could prognostic, their labor were at an end, nor need they compass the earth, seeking whom they may devour. Those who, upon a rigid application of the law, sentence Solomon unto damnation, condemn not only him, but themselves, and the whole world.* For by the letter and written word of God, we

* St. Augustine, upon Psalm cxxvi. and in many other places, holds that Solomon is damned. Of the same opinion is Lyra, in 2 Reg. c. 7. and Bellarmin, 1 Tom. lib. 1. Controv. c. 5.

are without exception in the state of death, but there is a prerogative of God, and an arbitrary pleasure above the letter of his own law, by which alone we can pretend unto salvation, and through which Solomon might be as easily saved as those that condemn him.

The number of those who pretend unto salvation, and those infinite swarms who think to pass through the eye of this needle, have much amazed me. That name and compellation of "little flock," doth not comfort but deject my devotion, especially when I reflect upon mine own unworthiness, wherein, according to my humble apprehensions, I am below them all. I believe there shall never be an anarchy in heaven; but as there are hierarchies amongst the angels, so shall there be degrees of priority amongst the saints. Yet is it (I protest) beyond my ambition to aspire unto the first ranks; my desires only are, and I shall be happy therein, to be but the last man, and bring up the rear in heaven.

Again, I am confident, and fully persuaded, yet dare not take my oath, of my salvation. I am, as it were, sure, and do believe without all doubt, that there is such a city as Constantinople; yet for me to take my oath thereon, were a kind of perjury, because I hold no infallible warrant from my own sense to confirm me in the

certainty thereof. And truly, though many pretend to an absolute certainty of their salvation, yet when an humble soul shall contemplate her own unworthiness, she shall meet with many doubts, and suddenly find how little we stand in need of the precept of Saint Paul, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling." That which is the cause of my election, I hold to be the cause of my salvation, which was the mercy and beneplacit of God, before I was, or the foundation of the world. "Before Abraham was, I am," is the saying of Christ; yet is it true in some sense if I say it of myself, for I was not only before myself, but Adam, that is in the idea of God, and the decree of that synod held from all eternity. And in this sense, I say, the world was before the creation, and at an end before it had a beginning. And thus was I dead before I was alive; though my grave be England, my dying place was Paradise, and Eve miscarried of me before she conceived of Cain.

Insolent zeals that do decry good works and rely only upon faith, take not away merit; for depending upon the efficacy of their faith, they enforce the condition of God, and in a more sophistical way do seem to challenge heaven. It was decreed by God, that only those that lapped in the water like dogs, should have the honor

to destroy the Midianites; yet could none of those justly challenge, or imagine that he deserved that honor thereupon.* I do not deny, but that true faith, and such as God requires, is not only a mark or token, but also a means of our salvation; but where to find this, is as obscure to me, as my last end. And if our Saviour could object unto his own disciples and favorites, a faith, that, to the quantity of a grain of mustard-seed, is able to remove mountains, surely that which we boast of is not any thing, or, at the most, but a remove from nothing. This is the tenor of my belief, wherein, though there be many things singular, and to the humor of my irregular self, yet if they square not with maturer judgments, I disclaim them, and do no further favor them, than the learned and best judgments shall authorize them.

* Judges vii. 5.

RELIGIO MEDICI.

THE SECOND PART.

Now for that other virtue of Charity, without which faith is a mere notion, and of no existence, I have ever endeavoured to nourish the merciful disposition, and humane inclination I borrowed from my parents, and regulate it to the written and prescribed laws of charity; and if I hold the true anatomy of myself, I am delineated and naturally framed to such a piece of virtue; for I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathizes with all things. I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in diet, humor, air, any thing. I wonder not at the French for their dishes of frogs, snails, and toadstools, nor at the Jews for locusts and grasshoppers; but being amongst them, make

them my common viands, and I find they agree with my stomach as well as theirs. I could digest a salad gathered in a churchyard, as well as in a garden. I cannot start at the presence of a serpent, scorpion, lizard, or salamander; at the sight of a toad or viper, I find in me no desire to take up a stone to destroy them. I feel not in myself those common antipathies that I can discover in others. Those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italians, Spaniards, or Dutch; but where I find their actions in balance with my countrymen's, I honor, love, and embrace them in some degree. I was born in the eighth climate, but seem for to be framed and constellated unto all. I am no plant that will not prosper out of a garden. All places, all airs make unto me one country; I am in England every where, and under any meridian. I have been shipwrecked, yet am not an enemy with the sea or winds. I can study, play, or sleep in a tempest. In brief, I am averse from nothing. My conscience would give me the lie if I should say I absolutely detest or hate any essence but the devil, or so at least abhor any thing but that we might come to composition. If there be any among those common objects of hatred I do contemn and laugh at, it is that great ene-

my of reason, virtue, and religion, the multitude; that numerous piece of monstrosity, which taken asunder seem men, and the reasonable creatures of God; but confused together, make one great beast, and a monstrosity more prodigious than hydra. It is no breach of charity to call these fools; it is the style all holy writers have afforded them, set down by Solomon in canonical Scripture, and a point of our faith to believe so. Neither in the name of multitude do I only include the base and minor sort of people. There is a rabble even amongst the gentry, a sort of plebeian heads, whose fancy moves with the same wheel as these; men in the same level with mechanics, though their fortunes do somewhat gild their infirmities, and their purses compound for their follies. But as in casting account, three or four men together come short in account of one man placed by himself below them; so neither are a troop of these ignorant doradoes, of that true esteem and value, as many a forlorn person, whose condition doth place him below their feet. Let us speak like politicians; there is a nobility without heraldry, a natural dignity, whereby one man is ranked with another, another filed before him, according to the quality of his desert, and preëminence of his good parts. Though the corruption of these times, and the

bias of present practice wheel another way, thus it was in the first and primitive commonwealths, and is yet in the integrity and cradle of well ordered polities, till corruption getteth ground, ruder desires laboring after that which wiser considerations contemn, every one having a liberty to amass and heap up riches, and they a license or faculty to do or purchase any thing.

This general and indifferent temper of mine doth more nearly dispose me to this noble virtue. It is a happiness to be born and framed unto virtue, and to grow up from the seeds of nature, rather than the inoculation and forced graffs of education. Yet if we are directed only by our particular natures, and regulate our inclinations by no higher rule than that of our reasons, we are but moralists; divinity will still call us heathens. Therefore this great work of charity, must have other motives, ends, and impulsions. I give no alms only to satisfy the hunger of my brother, but to fulfil and accomplish the will and command of my God. I draw not my purse for his sake that demands it, but his that enjoined it. I relieve no man upon the rhetoric of his miseries, nor to content mine own commiserating disposition, for this is still but moral charity, and an act that oweth more to passion than reason. He that relieves another upon the bare suggestion and bowels

of pity, doth not this so much for his sake, as for his own; for by compassion we make others' misery our own, and so by relieving them, we relieve ourselves also. It is as erroneous a conceit to redress other men's misfortunes upon the common considerations of merciful natures, that it may one day be our own case; for this is a sinister and politic kind of charity, whereby we seem to bespeak the pity of men in the like occasions; and truly I have observed that those professed eleemosynaries, though in a crowd or multitude, do yet direct and place their petitions on a few and selected persons. There is surely a physiognomy, which those experienced and master mendicants observe, whereby they instantly discover a merciful aspect, and will single out a face, wherein they spy the signatures and marks of mercy; for there are mystically in our faces certain characters which carry in them the motto of our souls, wherein he that can read A, B, C, may read our natures. I hold moreover that there is a phytognomy or physiognomy, not only of men, but of plants, and vegetables; and in every one of them some outward figures which hang as signs or bushes of their inward forms. The finger of God hath left an inscription upon all his works, not graphical or composed of letters, but of their several forms, constitutions,

parts, and operations, which aptly joined together do make one word that doth express their natures. By these letters God calls the stars by their names, and by this alphabet Adam assigned to every creature a name peculiar to its nature. Now there are, besides these characters in our faces, certain mystical figures in our hands, which I dare not call mere dashes, strokes "à la volée," or at random, because delineated by a pencil, that never works in vain; and hereof I take more particular notice, because I carry that in mine own hand, which I could never read of nor discover in another. Aristotle, I confess, in his acute and singular book of physiognomy, hath made no mention of chiromancy; yet I believe the Egyptians, who were nearer addicted to those abstruse and mystical sciences, had a knowledge therein, to which those vagabond and counterfeit Egyptians did after pretend, and perhaps retained a few corrupted principles, which sometimes might verify their prognostics.

It is the common wonder of all men, how, among so many millions of faces, there should be none alike. Now, contrary, I wonder as much how there should be any. He that shall consider how many thousand several words have been carelessly and without study composed out

of twenty-four letters; withal, how many hundred lines there are to be drawn in the fabric of one man; shall easily find that this variety is necessary; and it will be very hard that they shall so concur, as to make one portrait like another. Let a painter carelessly limn out a million of faces, and you shall find them all different; yea, let him have his copy before him, yet after all his art there will remain a sensible distinction; for the pattern or example of every thing is the perfectest in that kind, whereof we still come short, though we transcend or go beyond it, because herein it is wide, and agrees not in all points unto the copy. Nor doth the similitude of creatures disparage the variety of nature, nor any way confound the works of God; for even in things alike there is diversity, and those that do seem to accord, do manifestly disagree. And thus is man like God; for in the same things that we resemble him, we are utterly different from him. There was never any thing so like another, as in all points to concur. There will ever some reserved difference slip in, to prevent the identity; without which, two several things would not be alike, but the same, which is impossible.

But to return from philosophy to charity. I hold not so narrow a conceit of this virtue, as to conceive that to give alms, is only to be

charitable, or think a piece of liberality can comprehend the total of charity. Divinity hath wisely divided the act thereof into many branches, and hath taught us, in this narrow way, many paths unto goodness. As many ways as we may do good, so many ways we may be charitable. There are infirmities, not only of body, but of soul and fortunes, which do require the merciful hand of our abilities. I cannot contemn a man for ignorance, but behold him with as much pity as I do Lazarus. It is no greater charity to clothe his body than apparel the nakedness of his soul. It is an honorable object to see the reasons of other men wear our liveries, and their borrowed understandings do homage to the bounty of ours. It is the cheapest way of beneficence, and like the natural charity of the sun, illuminates another without obscuring itself. To be reserved and caitiff in this part of goodness, is the sordidest piece of covetousness, and more contemptible than pecuniary avarice. To this (as calling myself a scholar) I am obliged by the duty of my condition. I make not therefore my head a grave, but a treasury of knowledge. I intend no monopoly, but a community in learning. I study not for my own sake only, but for theirs that study not for themselves. I envy no man that knows more than myself, but pity them that

know less. I instruct no man as an exercise of my knowledge, or with an intent rather to nourish and keep it alive in mine own head, than beget and propagate it in his; and in the midst of all my endeavours, there is but one thought that dejects me, that my acquired parts must perish with myself, nor can be legacied among my honored friends. I cannot fall out, or contemn a man for an error, or conceive why a difference in opinion should divide an affection; for controversies, disputes, and argumentations, both in philosophy and in divinity, if they meet with discreet and peaceable natures, do not infringe the laws of charity. In all disputes, so much as there is of passion, so much there is of nothing to the purpose; for then reason, like a bad hound, spends upon a false scent, and forsakes the question first started. And this is one reason why controversies are never determined; for though they be amply proposed, they are scarce at all handled, they do so swell with unnecessary digressions; and the parenthesis on the party is often as large as the main discourse upon the subject. The foundations of religion are already established, and the principles of salvation subscribed unto by all; there remain not many controversies worth a passion, and yet never any disputed without, not only in divinity, but inferior arts.

What a *βατραχομυομαχία* and hot skirmish is betwixt *Σ* and *T* in Lucian.* How do grammarians hack and slash for the genitive case in Jupiter. How do they break their own pates to salve that of Priscian. "Si foret in terris, rideret Democritus." Yea, even amongst wiser militants, how many wounds have been given, and credits slain, for the poor victory of an opinion, or beggarly conquest of a distinction? Scholars are men of peace, they bear no arms, but their tongues are sharper than Actius his razor; † their pens carry further and give a louder report than thunder. I had rather stand the shock of a basilisco, than the fury of a merciless pen. It is not mere zeal to learning, or devotion to the muses, that wiser princes

* In his dialogue, "Judicium Vocalium," where there is a large oration made to the vowels, being judges, by Sigma against Tau, complaining that Tau has bereaved him of many words which should begin with Sigma.

† Actius Nœvius was chief Augur, who, as the story saith, admonishing Tarquinius Priscus, that he should not undertake any action of moment, without first consulting the Augur, the king, showing that he had little faith in his skill, demanded of him whether, by the rules of his skill, what he had conceived in his mind might be done. To whom when Actius had answered it might be done, he bid him take a whetstone which he had in his hand, and cut it in two with a razor; which accordingly the Augur did. *Livy.*

patron the arts, and carry an indulgent aspect unto scholars; but a desire to have their names eternized by the memory of their writings, and a fear of the revengeful pen of succeeding ages. For these are the men, that when they have played their parts, and had their exits, must step out and give the moral of their scenes, and deliver unto posterity an inventory of their virtues and vices. And surely there goes a great deal of conscience to the compiling of a history. There is no reproach to the scandal of a story; it is such an authentic kind of falsehood, that with authority belies our good names to all nations and posterity.

There is another offence unto charity, which no author hath ever written of, and few take notice of, and that 's the reproach, not of whole professions, mysteries, and conditions, but of whole nations, wherein by opprobrious epithets we miscall each other, and by an uncharitable logic, from a disposition in a few, conclude a habit in all.

"Le mutin Anglois, et le bravache Ecossois;
Le bougre Italien, et le fol François;
Le poltron Romain, le larron de Gascogne,
L'Espagnol superbe, et l'Allemand ivrogne."[1]

St. Paul, that calls the Cretans liars, doth it but indirectly, and upon quotation of their own poet. It is as bloody a thought in one way, as

Nero's was in another; for by a word we wound a thousand, and at one blow assassin the honor of a nation.* It is as complete a piece of madness to miscall and rave against the times, or think to recall men to reason by a fit of passion. Democritus, that thought to laugh the times into goodness, seems to me as deeply hypochondriac as Heraclitus, that bewailed them. It moves not my spleen to behold the multitude in their proper humors, that is, in their fits of folly and madness, as well understanding that wisdom is not profaned unto the world, and 't is the privilege of a few to be virtuous. They that endeavour to abolish vice, destroy also virtue; for contraries, though they destroy one another, are yet in life of one another. Thus virtue (abolish vice) is an idea. Again, the community of sin doth not disparage goodness; for when vice gains upon

* I suppose he alludes to that passage in Suetonius, in the Life of Nero, where he relates that a certain person, upon a time, spoke in his hearing these words,

Ἐμοῦ θανόντος, γαῖα μιχθήτω πυρί.

i. e. "When I am dead, let earth be mingled with fire." Whereupon the Emperor uttered these words, Ἐμοῦ ζῶντος, i. e. "Yea, whilst I live." There by one word he expressed a cruel thought, which I think is the thing he meant. This is more cruel than the wish of Caligula, that the people of Rome had but one neck, that he might destroy them all at a blow.

the major part, virtue, in whom it remains, becomes more excellent, and being lost in some, multiplies its goodness in others, which remain untouched, and persist entire in the general inundation. I can therefore behold vice without a satire, content only with an admonition, or instructive reprehension; for noble natures, and such as are capable of goodness, are railed into vice, that might as easily be admonished into virtue; and we should be all so far the orators of goodness, as to protect her from the power of vice, and maintain the cause of injured truth. No man can justly censure or condemn another, because indeed no man truly knows another. This I perceive in myself; for I am in the dark to all the world, and my nearest friends behold me but in a cloud. Those that know me but superficially, think less of me than I do of myself; those of my near acquaintance think more. God, who truly knows me, knows that I am nothing; for he only beholds me and all the world, who looks not on us through a derived ray, or a trajection of a sensible species, but beholds the substance without the helps of accidents, and the forms of things, as we their operations. Further, no man can judge another, because no man knows himself; for we censure others but as they disagree from that humor which we fancy

laudable in ourselves, and commend others but for that wherein they seem to quadrate and consent with us. (So that, in conclusion, all is but that we all condemn, self-love.) 'T is the general complaint of these times, and perhaps of those past, that charity grows cold; which I perceive most verified in those which most do manifest the fires and flames of zeal; for it is a virtue that best agrees with coldest natures, and such as are complexioned for humility. But how shall we expect charity towards others, when we are uncharitable to ourselves? "Charity begins at home," is the voice of the world, yet is every man his greatest enemy, and as it were his own executioner. "Non occides," is the commandment of God, yet scarce observed by any man; for I perceive every man is his own Atropos, and lends a hand to cut the thread of his own days. Cain was not therefore the first murderer, but Adam, who brought in death; whereof he beheld the practice and example in his own son Abel, and saw that verified in the experience of another, which faith could not persuade him in the theory of himself.

There is, I think, no man that apprehends his own miseries less than myself, and no man that so nearly apprehends another's. I could lose an arm without a tear, and with few groans,

methinks, be quartered into pieces; yet can I weep most seriously at a play, and receive with true passion the counterfeit grief of those known and professed impostures. It is a barbarous part of inhumanity to add unto any afflicted party's misery, or endeavour to multiply in any man a passion, whose single nature is already above his patience. This was the greatest affliction of Job, and those oblique expostulations of his friends a deeper injury than the downright blows of the devil. It is not the tears of our own eyes only, but of our friends also, that do exhaust the current of our sorrows, which, falling into many streams, runs more peaceably, and is contented with a narrower channel. It is an act within the power of charity, to translate a passion out of one breast into another, and to divide a sorrow almost out of itself; for an affliction, like a dimension, may be so divided, as, if not indivisible, at least to become insensible. Now with my friend I desire not to share or participate, but to engross his sorrows, that, by making them my own, I may more easily discuss them; for in my own reason and within myself, I can command that, which I cannot entreat without myself and within the circle of another. I have often thought those noble pairs and examples of friendship not so truly histories of

what had been, as fictions of what should be; but I now perceive nothing in them but possibilities, nor any thing in the heroic examples of Damon and Pythias, Achilles and Patroclus, which methinks upon some grounds I could not perform within the narrow compass of myself. That a man should lay down his life for his friend, seems strange to vulgar affections, and such as confine themselves within that worldly principle, "Charity begins at home." For my own part, I could never remember the relations that I held unto myself, nor the respect that I owe unto my own nature, in the cause of God, my country, and my friends. Next to these three, I do embrace myself. I confess I do not observe that order that the schools ordain our affections, to love our parents, wives, children, and then our friends; for excepting the injunctions of religion, I do not find in myself such a necessary and indissoluble sympathy to all those of my blood. I hope I do not break the fifth commandment, if I conceive I may love my friend before the nearest of my blood, even those to whom I owe the principles of life. I never yet cast a true affection on a woman, but I have loved my friend as I do virtue, my soul, my God. From hence methinks I do conceive how God loves man, what happiness there is in the love of

God. Omitting all other, there are three most mystical unions; two natures in one person; three persons in one nature; one soul in two bodies. For though indeed they be really divided, yet are they so united, as they seem but one, and make rather a duality than two distinct souls.

There are wonders in true affection. It is a body of enigmas, mysteries, and riddles, wherein two so become one, as they both become two. I love my friend before myself, and yet methinks I do not love him enough. Some few months hence my multiplied affection will make me believe I have not loved him at all. When I am from him, I am dead till I be with him; when I am with him, I am not satisfied, but would still be nearer him. United souls are not satisfied with embraces, but desire to be truly each other; which being impossible, their desires are infinite, and must proceed without a possibility of satisfaction. Another misery there is in affection, that, whom we truly love like our own selves, we forget their looks, nor can our memory retain the idea of their faces; and it is no wonder, for they are ourselves, and our affection makes their looks our own. This noble affection falls not on vulgar and common constitutions, but on such as are marked for virtue. He that can love his friend with this

noble ardor, will, in a competent degree, affect all. Now if we can bring our affections to look beyond the body, and cast an eye upon the soul, we have found out the true object, not only of friendship, but charity; and the greatest happiness that we can bequeath the soul, is that wherein we all do place our last felicity, salvation; which, though it be not in our power to bestow, it is in our charity and pious invocations to desire, if not procure and further. I cannot contentedly frame a prayer for myself in particular, without a catalogue for my friends; nor request a happiness wherein my sociable disposition doth not desire the fellowship of my neighbour. I never hear the toll of a passing-bell, though in my mirth, without my prayers and best wishes for the departing spirit. I cannot go to cure the body of my patient, but I forget my profession, and call unto God for his soul. I cannot see one say his prayers, but, instead of imitating him, I fall into a supplication for him, who perhaps is no more to me than a common nature; and if God hath vouchsafed an ear to my supplications, there are surely many happy that never saw me, and enjoy the blessing of my unknown devotions. To pray for enemies, that is, for their salvation, is no harsh precept, but the practice of our daily and ordinary devotions. I cannot be-

lieve the story of the Italian.* Our bad wishes and uncharitable desires proceed no further than this life. It is the devil, and the uncharitable votes of hell, that desire our misery in the world to come.

To do no injury, nor take none, was a principle, which to my former years, and impatient affections, seemed to contain enough of morality; but my more settled years, and Christian constitution, have fallen upon severer resolutions. I can hold there is no such thing as injury; that if there be, there is no such injury as revenge, and no such revenge as the contempt of an injury; that to hate another, is to malign himself; that the truest way to love another, is to despise ourselves. I were unjust unto my own conscience, if I should say I am at variance with any thing like myself. I find there are many pieces in this one fabric of man; this frame is raised upon a mass of antipathies. I am one, methinks, but as the world; wherein, notwithstanding, there are a swarm of distinct essences, and in them another world of contrari-

* It is reported that a certain Italian, having met with one that had highly provoked him, put a poniard to his breast, and unless he would blaspheme God, told him he would kill him; which the other doing to save his life, the Italian presently killed him, to the intent he might be damned, having no time for repentance.

eties; we carry private and domestic enemies within, public and more hostile adversaries without. The devil, that did but buffet St. Paul, plays, methinks, at sharp with me. Let me be nothing, if within the compass of myself, I do not find the battle of Lepanto, passion against reason, reason against faith, faith against the devil, and my conscience against all. There is another man within me, that 's angry with me, rebukes, commands, and dastards me. I have no conscience of marble, to resist the hammer of more heavy offences; nor yet too soft and waxen, as to take the impression of each single peccadillo or scape of infirmity. I am of a strange belief, that it is as easy to be forgiven some sins, as to commit some others. For my original sin, I hold it to be washed away in my baptism; for my actual transgressions, I compute and reckon with God, but from my last repentance, sacrament, or general absolution; and therefore am not terrified with the sins or madness of my youth. I thank the goodness of God, I have no sins that want a name; I am not singular in offences; my transgressions are epidemical, and from the common breath of our corruption. For there are certain tempers of body, which matched with a humorous depravity of mind, do hatch and produce vitiosities, whose

newness and monstrosity of nature admits no name. This was the temper of that lecher that carnalled with a statua, and the constitution of Nero in his Spintrian recreations. For the heavens are not only fruitful in new and unheard-of stars, the earth in plants and animals, but men's minds also in villany and vices. Now the dullness of my reason, and the vulgarity of my disposition, never prompted my invention, nor solicited my affection unto any of those; yet even those common and quotidian infirmities that so necessarily attend me, and do seem to be my very nature, have so dejected me, so broken the estimation that I should have otherwise of myself, that I repute myself the most abject piece of mortality. Divines prescribe a fit of sorrow to repentance; there goes indignation, anger, sorrow, hatred, into mine; passions of a contrary nature, which neither seem to suit with this action, nor my proper constitution. It is no breach of charity to ourselves, to be at variance with our vices, nor to abhor that part of us, which is an enemy to the ground of charity, our God; wherein we do but imitate our great selves, the world, whose divided antipathies and contrary faces do yet carry a charitable regard unto the whole, by their particular discords preserving the common harmony, and keeping in fetters those powers,

whose rebellions, once masters, might be the ruin of all.

I thank God, amongst those millions of vices I do inherit and hold from Adam, I have escaped one, and that a mortal enemy to charity, the first and father sin, not only of man, but of the devil, — pride; a vice whose name is comprehended in a monosyllable, but in its nature not circumscribed with a world. I have escaped it in a condition that can hardly avoid it. Those petty acquisitions and reputed perfections that advance and elevate the conceits of other men, add no feathers unto mine. I have seen a grammarian tower and plume himself over a single line in Horace, and show more pride in the construction of one ode, than the author in the composure of the whole book. For my own part, besides the jargon and patois of several provinces, I understand no less than six languages; yet I protest I have no higher conceit of myself than had our fathers before the confusion of Babel, when there was but one language in the world, and none to boast himself either linguist or critic. I have not only seen several countries, beheld the nature of their climes, the chorography of their provinces, topography of their cities, but understood their several laws, customs, and policies; yet cannot all this persuade the dulness

of my spirit unto such an opinion of myself as I behold in nimbler and conceited heads, that never looked a degree beyond their nests. I know the names, and somewhat more, of all the constellations in my horizon; yet I have seen a prating mariner, that could only name the Pointers and the north star, out-talk me, and conceit himself a whole sphere above me. I know most of the plants of my country and of those about me; yet methinks I do not know so many as when I did but know a hundred, and had scarcely ever simpled further than Cheapside. For indeed heads of capacity, and such as are not full with a handful or easy measure of knowledge, think they know nothing till they know all; which being impossible, they fall upon the opinion of Socrates, and only know they know not any thing. I cannot think that Homer pined away upon the riddle of the fishermen,* or that Aristotle, who under-

* The history out of Plutarch is thus. Homer, sailing from Thebes to the island Ion, being landed and set down upon the shore, there happened certain fishermen to pass by him, and he asking them what they had taken, they made him this enigmatical answer; that what they had taken they had left behind them, and what they had not taken they had with them; meaning, that, because they could take no fish, they went to louse themselves, and that all which they had taken they had killed and left behind them, and all which they had not

stood the uncertainty of knowledge, and confessed so often the reason of man too weak for the works of nature, did ever drown himself upon the flux and reflux of Euripus. We do but learn to-day what our better advanced judgments will unteach to-morrow; and Aristotle doth but instruct us as Plato did him; that is, to confute himself. I have run through all sorts, yet find no rest in any; though our first studies and junior endeavours may style us Peripatetics, Stoics, or Academics, yet I perceive the wisest heads prove at last almost all Skeptics, and stand like Janus in the field of knowledge. I have therefore one common and authentic philosophy I learned in the schools, whereby I discourse and satisfy the reason of other men; another more reserved, and drawn from experience, whereby I content mine own. Solomon, that complained of ignorance in the height of knowledge, hath not only humbled my conceits, but discouraged my endeavours. There is yet another conceit that hath some-

taken they had with them in their clothes; and that Homer, being struck with a deep sadness because he could not interpret this, pined away, and at last died. Pliny alludes to this riddle in his epistle to his friend Fuscus, where, giving an account of spending his time in the country, he tells him, "Venor aliquando, sed non sine pugillaribus, ut, quamvis nihil ceperim, nonnihil referam." Plin. Ep. Lib. ix. Ep. 36.

times made me shut my books, which tells me it is a vanity to waste our days in the blind pursuit of knowledge; it is but attending a little longer, and we shall enjoy that by instinct and infusion, which we endeavour at here by labor and inquisition. It is better to sit down in a modest ignorance, and rest contented with the natural blessing of our own reasons, than buy the uncertain knowledge of this life with sweat and vexation, which death gives every fool gratis, and is an accessary of our glorification.

I was never yet once, and commend their resolutions who never marry twice; not that I disallow of second marriages, as neither, in all cases, of polygamy, which, considering some times and the unequal number of both sexes, may be also necessary. The whole world was made for man, but the twelfth part of man for woman. Man is the whole world and the breath of God; woman the rib and crooked piece of man. I could be content that we might procreate like trees, without conjunction, or that there were any way to perpetuate the world without this trivial and vulgar way of coition. It is the foolishest act a wise man commits in all his life, nor is there any thing that will more deject his cooled imagination, when he shall consider what an odd and un-

worthy piece of folly he hath committed. I speak not in prejudice, nor am averse from that sweet sex, but naturally amorous of all that is beautiful. I can look a whole day with delight upon a handsome picture, though it be but of a horse. It is my temper, and I like it the better, to affect all harmony; and sure there is music even in the beauty and the silent note which Cupid strikes, far sweeter than the sound of an instrument. For there is a music wherever there is a harmony, order, or proportion; and thus far we may maintain the music of the spheres; for those well ordered motions and regular paces, though they give no sound unto the ear, yet to the understanding they strike a note most full of harmony. Whosoever is harmonically composed, delights in harmony; which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which declaim against all church music. For myself, not only from my obedience, but my particular genius, I do embrace it; for even that vulgar and tavern music, which makes one man merry, another mad, strikes in me a deep fit of devotion, and a profound contemplation of the first Composer. There is something in it of divinity more than the ear discovers; it is an hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world and creatures of God; such a melody to the ear, as the

whole world, well understood, would afford the understanding. In brief, it is a sensible fit of that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ears of God. I will not say with Plato, the soul is a harmony, but harmonical, and hath its nearest sympathy unto music. Thus some, whose temper of body agrees and humors the constitution of their souls, are born poets, though indeed all are naturally inclined unto rhythm. This made Tacitus, in the very first line of his story, fall upon a verse; * and Cicero, the worst of poets, but declaiming for a poet, falls in the very first sentence upon a perfect hexameter. †

I feel not in me those sordid and unchristian desires of my profession. I do not secretly implore and wish for plagues, rejoice at famines, revolve ephemerides and almanacs in expectation of malignant aspects, fatal conjunctions, and eclipses. I rejoice not at unwholesome springs, nor unseasonable winters. My prayer goes with the husbandman's; I desire every thing in its proper season, that neither men nor the times be put out of temper. Let me be sick myself, if sometimes the malady of my patient be not a disease unto me. I desire rather to cure his infirmities than my own

* Urbem Romam in principio reges habuêre.

† In quâ me non inficior mediocriter esse.

necessities. Where I do him no good, methinks it is scarce honest gain; though I confess 't is but the worthy salary of our well-intended endeavours. I am not only ashamed, but heartily sorry, that, besides death, there are diseases incurable; yet not for my own sake, or that they be beyond my art, but for the general cause and sake of humanity, whose common cause I apprehend as mine own. And, to speak more generally, those three noble professions, which all civil commonwealths do honor, are raised upon the fall of Adam, and are not exempt from their infirmities. There are not only diseases incurable in physic, but cases indissolvable in laws, vices incorrigible in divinity. If general councils may err, I do not see why particular courts should be infallible. Their perfectest rules are raised upon the erroneous reasons of man, and the laws of one do but condemn the rules of another; as Aristotle ofttimes the opinions of his predecessors, because, though agreeable to reason, yet were not consonant to his own rules, and the logic of his proper principles. Again, to speak nothing of the sin against the Holy Ghost, whose cure not only, but whose nature is unknown; I can cure the gout or stone in some, sooner than divinity pride or avarice in others. I can cure vices by physic, when they remain incurable by

divinity, and they shall obey my pills when they contemn their precepts. I boast nothing, but plainly say, we all labor against our own cure; for death is the cure of all diseases. There is no catholicon or universal remedy I know but this; which, though nauseous to queasy stomachs, yet to prepared appetites is nectar and a pleasant potion of immortality.

For my conversation, it is like the sun's, with all men, and with a friendly aspect to good and bad. Methinks there is no man bad, and the worst, best; that is, while they are kept within the circle of those qualities, wherein there is good. There is no man's mind of such discordant and jarring a temper, to which a tunable disposition may not strike a harmony. "Magnæ virtutes, nec minora vitia"; it is the posy of the best natures, and may be inverted on the worst.* There are, in the most depraved and venomous dispositions, certain pieces that remain untouched, which, by an antiperistasis, become more excellent, or by the excellency of their antipathies are able to preserve themselves from the contagion of

* That is, that there are none so abandoned to vice, but they have some sprinklings of virtue. There are scarce any so vicious, but commend virtue in those that are endued with it, and do some things laudable themselves.

their enemy vices, and persist entire beyond the general corruption. For it is thus also in nature. The greatest balsams do lie enveloped in the bodies of the most powerful corrosives. I say moreover, and I ground upon experience, that poisons contain within themselves their own antidote, and that which preserves them from the venom of themselves, without which they were not deleterious to others only, but to themselves also. But it is the corruption that I fear within me, not the contagion of commerce without me. 'T is that unruly regiment within me that will destroy me. 'T is I that do infect myself. The man without a navel yet lives in me.* I feel that original canker corrode and devour me; and therefore "Defenda me, Dios, de me"; "Lord, deliver me from myself," is a part of my litany and the first voice of my retired imaginations. There is no man alone, because every man is a microcosm, and carries the whole world about him. "Nunquam minus solus quàm cum solus," though it be the apothegm of a wise man, is yet true in the mouth of a fool. For indeed, though in a wilderness, a man is never alone, not only because he is with himself and his own thoughts, but because he is with the devil, who ever consorts with our solitude, and is that unruly rebel that musters

* The old Adam.

up those disordered motions, which accompany our sequestered imaginations. And to speak more narrowly, there is no such thing as solitude, nor any thing that can be said to be alone, and by itself, but God, who is his own circle, and can subsist by himself. All others, besides their dissimilary and heterogeneous parts, which in a manner multiply their natures, cannot subsist without the concourse of God, and the society of that hand which doth uphold their natures. In brief, there can be nothing truly alone, and by itself, which is not truly one, and such is only God. All others do transcend a unity, and so by consequence are many.

Now for my life, it is a miracle of thirty years, which to relate, were not a history, but a piece of poetry, and would sound to common ears like a fable. For the world, I count it not an inn, but an hospital, and a place, not to live but to die in. The world that I regard is myself; it is the microcosm of mine own frame, that I cast mine eye on; for the other, I use it but like my globe, and turn it round sometimes for my recreation. Men that look upon my outside, perusing only my condition and fortunes, do err in my altitude; for I am above Atlas his shoulders. The earth is a point not only in respect of the heavens above us, but of that heavenly and celestial part within us. That

mass of flesh that circumscribes me, limits not my mind. That surface that tells the heavens it hath an end, cannot persuade me I have any. I take my circle to be above three hundred and sixty; though the number of the arc do measure my body, it comprehendeth not my mind. Whilst I study to find how I am a microcosm, or little world, I find myself something more than the great. There is surely a piece of divinity in us, something that was before the elements, and owes no homage unto the sun. Nature tells me I am the image of God, as well as Scripture. He that understands not thus much, hath not his introduction or first lesson, and is yet to begin the alphabet of man.

Let me not injure the felicity of others, if I say I am as happy as any. "Ruat cœlum, fiat voluntas tua," salveth all; so that, whatsoever happens, it is but what our daily prayers desire. In brief, I am content, and what should Providence add more? Surely this is it we call happiness, and this do I enjoy; with this I am happy in a dream, and as content to enjoy a happiness in a fancy, as others in a more apparent truth and reality. There is surely a nearer apprehension of any thing that delights us in our dreams than in our waked senses. Without this I were unhappy; for my awaked judgment discontents me, ever whispering unto me that I

am from my friend; but my friendly dreams in the night requite me, and make me think I am within his arms. I thank God for my happy dreams, as I do for my good rest; for there is a satisfaction in them unto reasonable desires, and such as can be content with a fit of happiness; and surely it is not a melancholy conceit to think we are all asleep in this world, and that the conceits of this life are as mere dreams to those of the next, as the phantasms of the night to the conceits of the day. There is an equal delusion in both, and the one doth but seem to be the emblem or picture of the other. We are somewhat more than ourselves in our sleeps, and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of the soul. It is the ligation of sense, but the liberty of reason, and our waking conceptions do not match the fancies of our sleeps. At my nativity, my ascendant was the watery sign of Scorpius; I was born in the planetary hour of Saturn, and I think I have a piece of that leaden planet in me. I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardise of company; yet in one dream I can compose a whole comedy, behold the action, apprehend the jests, and laugh myself awake at the conceits thereof. Were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams; and this time also

would I choose for my devotions. But our grosser memories have then so little hold of our abstracted understandings, that they forget the story, and can only relate to our awaked souls a confused and broken tale of that that hath passed. Aristotle, who hath written a singular tract of sleep, hath not methinks throughly defined it; nor yet Galen, though he seems to have corrected it. For those noctambulos and nightwalkers, though in their sleep, do yet enjoy the action of their senses. We must therefore say, that there is something in us that is not in the jurisdiction of Morpheus, and that those abstracted and ecstatic souls do walk about in their own corps, as spirits with the bodies they assume; wherein they seem to hear, see, and feel, though indeed the organs are destitute of sense, and their natures of those faculties that should inform them. Thus it is observed, that men sometimes, upon the hour of their departure, do speak and reason above themselves. For then the soul, beginning to be freed from the ligaments of the body, begins to reason like herself, and to discourse in a strain above mortality.

We term sleep a death, and yet it is waking that kills us, and destroys those spirits that are the house of life. 'T is indeed a part of life

that best expresseth death; for every man truly lives so long as he acts his nature, or some way makes good the faculties of himself. Themistocles therefore, that slew his soldier in his sleep, was a merciful executioner. 'T is a kind of punishment the mildness of no laws hath invented. I wonder the fancy of Lucan and Seneca did not discover it.* It is that death by which we may be literally said to die daily; a death which Adam died before his mortality; a death whereby we live; a middle and moderating point between life and death; in fine, so like death, I dare not trust it without my prayers and a half adieu unto the world, and take my farewell in a colloquy with God.

The night is come, like to the day;
Depart not thou, great God, away.
Let not my sins, black as the night,
Eclipse the lustre of thy light.
Keep still in my horizon; for to me
The sun makes not the day, but thee.
Thou, whose nature cannot sleep,
On my temples sentry keep;
Guard me 'gainst those watchful foes,
Whose eyes are open while mine close.
Let no dreams my head infest,
But such as Jacob's temples blest.

* Both of whom were permitted by Nero to choose the mode in which they would die.

While I do rest, my soul advance,
Make my sleep a holy trance;
That I may, my rest being wrought,
Awake into some holy thought;
And with as active vigor run
My course as doth the nimble sun.
Sleep is a death. O make me try,
By sleeping, what it is to die;
And as gently lay my head
On my grave as now my bed.
Howe'er I rest, great God, let me
Awake again at last with thee.
And thus assured, behold I lie
Securely, or to awake or die.
These are my drowsy days; in vain
I do now wake to sleep again.
O come that hour, when I shall never
Sleep again, but wake for ever.

This is the dormitive I take to bedward. I need no other laudanum than this to make me sleep; after which I close mine eyes in security, content to take my leave of the sun, and sleep unto the resurrection.

The method I should use in distributive justice, I often observe in commutative, and keep a geometrical proportion in both; whereby, becoming equable to others, I become unjust to myself, and supererogate in that common principle, "Do unto others as thou wouldst be done unto thyself." I was not born unto riches, neither is it, I think, my star to be wealthy;

or if it were, the freedom of my mind and frankness of my disposition were able to contradict and cross my fates; for to me avarice seems not so much a vice as a deplorable piece of madness. To conceive ourselves urinals, or be persuaded that we are dead, is not so ridiculous, nor so many degrees beyond the power of hellebore, as this. The opinions of theory and positions of men are not so void of reason as their practised conclusions. Some have held that snow is black, that the earth moves, that the soul is air, fire, water; but all this is philosophy, and there is no delirium, if we do but speculate the folly and indisputable dotage of avarice to that subterraneous idol and god of the earth. I do confess I am an atheist; I cannot persuade myself to honor that the world adores. Whatsoever virtue its prepared substance may have within my body, it hath no influence nor operation without. I would not entertain a base design, or an action that should call me villain, for the Indies; and for this only do I love and honor my own soul, and have methinks two arms too few to embrace myself. Aristotle is too severe, that will not allow us to be truly liberal without wealth and the bountiful hand of fortune. If this be true, I must confess I am charitable only in my liberal intentions and bountiful well-

wishes. But if the example of the mite be not only an act of wonder, but an example of the noblest charity, surely poor men may also build hospitals, and the rich alone have not erected cathedrals. I have a private method which others observe not. I take the opportunity of myself to do good. I borrow occasion of charity from my own necessities, and supply the wants of others when I am in most need myself; for it is an honest stratagem to take advantage of ourselves, and so to husband the acts of virtue, that where they were defective in one circumstance, they may repay their want and multiply their goodness in another. I have not Peru in my desires, but a competence, and ability to perform those good works to which He hath inclined my nature. He is rich who hath enough to be charitable; and it is hard to be so poor, that a noble mind may not find a way to this piece of goodness. "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord." There is more rhetoric in that one sentence, than in a library of sermons; and indeed if those sentences were understood by the reader with the same emphasis as they are delivered by the author, we needed not those volumes of instructions, but might be honest by an epitome. Upon this motive only I cannot behold a beggar without relieving his necessities with my

purse, or his soul with my prayers. These scenical and accidental differences between us cannot make me forget that common and untouched part of us both. There is, under these centos and miserable outsides, these mutilate and semi-bodies, a soul of the same alloy with our own, whose genealogy is God as well as ours, and in as fair a way to salvation as ourselves. Statists that labor to contrive a commonwealth without poverty, take away the object of charity, not understanding only the commonwealth of a Christian, but forgetting the prophecy of Christ.

Now there is another part of charity, which is the basis and pillar of this, and that is, the love of God, for whom we love our neighbour; for this I think charity, to love God for himself, and our neighbour for God. All that is truly amiable is God, or, as it were, a divided piece of him, that retains a reflex or shadow of himself. Nor is it strange that we should place affection on that which is invisible. All that we truly love is thus. What we adore under affection of our senses, deserves not the honor of so pure a title. Thus we adore virtue, though to the eyes of sense she be invisible. Thus that part of our noble friends that we love is not that part that we embrace, but that insensible part that our arms cannot embrace.

God being all goodness, can love nothing but himself and the traduction of his holy spirit. Let us call to assize the loves of our parents, the affections of our wives and children, and they are all dumb shows and dreams, without reality, truth, or constancy. For, first, there is a strong bond of affection between us and our parents; yet how easily dissolved. We betake ourselves to a woman, forget our mother in a wife, and the womb that bare us in that that shall bear our image. This woman blessing us with children, our affection leaves the level it held before, and sinks from our bed unto our issue and picture of posterity, where affection holds no steady mansion. They, growing up in years, desire our ends; or, applying themselves to a woman, take a lawful way to love another better than ourselves. Thus I perceive a man may be buried alive, and behold his grave in his own issue.

I conclude therefore and say, there is no happiness under (or, as Copernicus will have it, above) the sun, nor any "crambe" in that repeated verity and burthen of all the wisdom of Solomon, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." There is no felicity in that the world adores. Aristotle, whilst he labors to refute the ideas of Plato, falls upon one himself; for his "summum bonum" is a chimera, and there is no

such thing as his felicity. That wherein God himself is happy, the holy angels are happy, in whose defect the devils are unhappy, that dare I call happiness. Whatsoever conduceth unto this may, with an easy metaphor, deserve that name. Whatsoever else the world terms happiness is to me a story out of Pliny, a tale of Boccace or Malizspini, an apparition or neat delusion, wherein there is no more of happiness than the name. Bless me in this life with but peace of my conscience, command of my affections, the love of thyself and my dearest friends, and I shall be happy enough to pity Cæsar. These are, O Lord, the humble desires of my most reasonable ambition, and all I dare call happiness on earth; wherein I set no rule or limit to thy hand of providence. Dispose of me according to the wisdom of thy pleasure. Thy will be done, though in my own undoing.

HYDRIOTAPHIA.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

"I WONDER and admire his entireness in every subject that is before him. He follows it, he never wanders from it, and he has no occasion to wander; for whatever happens to be the subject, he metamorphoses all nature into it. In that treatise on some urns dug up in Norfolk, how earthy, how redolent of graves and sepulchres is ever line! You have now dark mould, now a thigh bone, now a skull, then a bit of a mouldered coffin, a fragment of an old tomb-stone with moss in its 'Hic Jacet,' a ghost, or a winding-sheet, or the echo of a funeral psalm wafted on a November wind; and the gayest thing you shall meet with shall be a silver nail or a gilt 'Anno Domini,' from a perished coffin-top."

REMARKS

ON THE

HYDRIOTAPHIA.

[The following remarks are extracted from an article in the Retrospective Review, Vol. I. p. 83.]

"Sir Thomas Browne, in the work before us, hath dared to take the grave itself for his theme. He deals not with death as a shadow, but as a substantial reality. He dwells not on it as the mere cessation of life; he treats it not as a terrible negation; but enters on its discussion as a state with its own solemnities and pomps. Others, who have professed to write on death, have treated merely of dying. They have fearfully described the rending asunder of soul and body, — the last farewell to existence, and the state of the spirit in its range through new and untried scenes of rapture or of wo. Some have individualized the theme, and written of death in relation only to particular persons or classes who become its victims. Those who regard it more universally and intensely, as Blair and Young, yet look but on its surface. They are conversant only with cypresses, yew trees, and grave-stones,

or hint at superstitions which endow the dead with life, and endue the tomb with something of vitality. Sir Thomas Browne alone treats of death as one subdued to its very essence. He encounters the tyrant, and 'plucks out the heart of his mystery.' He speaks not of the agonies of dissolution; but regards the destroyer only when he is laden with his spoils, and the subjects of his victory are at rest. The region of his imagination is that space beneath the surface of the world, where the bones of all generations repose. His fancy works beneath the ground its way from tomb to tomb, rests on each variety of burial, ennobles the naked clay of the peasant, expands in the sepulchres of kings, and, skimming beneath the deepest caverns of the sea, detects the unvalued jewels 'in those holes which eyes did once inhabit.' The language of his essay is weighty, yet tender, such as his theme should inspire. We can imagine nothing graver. His words are sepulchral; his ornaments are flowers of mortality. If his essay were read by Mr. Kemble, it would have appropriate voice, breathed forth in the tenderest of sepulchral tones, with cadences solemn and sweet as the last tremblings of good men's lives."

"Sir Thomas Browne, by his intense earnestness and vivid solemnity, seems really to endow the grave itself with life. He does not linger in the valley of the shadow of death, but enters within the portals, where the regal destroyer keeps his awful state; and yet there is nothing, thin, airy, or unsubstantial, nothing ghostly or shocking, in his work. He unveils, with a reverent touch, the material treasures

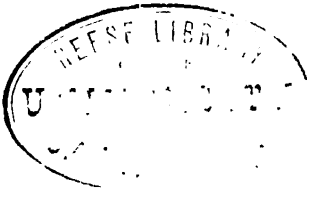
of the sepulchre; he describes these with the learning of an antiquary; moralizes on them with the wisdom of a philosopher; broods over them with the tenderness of an enthusiast; and associates with them sweet and congenial images, with the fancy of a poet. He is the laureat of the king of terrors; and most nobly does he celebrate the earthly magnificence of his kingdom. He discovers consolations not only in the hopes of immortality, but in the dusty and sad ornaments of the tomb. How richly does he speak of the liquors found in old sepulchres, as if death were the chief butler of time, and preserved patriarchal flavors within his vaults!"

"Sir Thomas Browne ennobles and consecrates whatever he touches. He makes us feel, that magnitude is not necessary to venerableness, for in his works, things which before appeared insignificant, impress us with an awful grandeur. He requires not a vast or gigantic object to stir and affect him. He perceives the high attributes of the smallest things, the antiquity and the consecration which they share with the mightiest, and renders an urn or a pyramid equal to the mind. His power, like that of death, levels distinctions; for he looks into the soul of things, instead of contemplating merely their external forms. Thus, by showing that the lowliest things have consecrating associations equal to the stateliest, he vindicates to Nature and Time those regalities which we are prone to attribute to stupendous remains of human skill, as if they appertained to them as inherent properties, and were not merely shed on them by hallowing years.

"But Sir Thomas Browne finds matter of deeper speculation in the regions of the grave, than any to which we have yet particularly alluded. He derives the nobleness of our nature even from its mortality on earth. In the most opposite ceremonials, he traces the spirit of a higher and more perfect life. Thus he treats the disregard of interment, as evincing a sense that the frame was but the shell of a finer essence, and the solemnities of burial as proving that man, in extending his cares beyond death, displays the instinct of a future being. Every thing with him has a profound and sacred meaning. He embodies the abstractions of humanity in the stateliest forms, elevating even the brevity of existence into a distinct being, and endowing it with venerable attributes. Past and Present, Life and Dissolution, Time and Immortality, seem to meet in his works, as in a fane 'for festal purpose decked with unrejoicing berries!'"

"Sir Thomas Browne has been contrasted with Bishop Jeremy Taylor, who like him wrote on death, and delighted to contemplate the symbols of man's decay. But no two things can be more opposite than their modes of treating the sacred theme. Jeremy Taylor broods only over the surface of the subject, and tinges it with roseate hues. He enters not the recesses of the grave, but moralizes at its entrance. While Sir Thomas Browne rakes among the bones for some strange relic in the deep bed of mortality, the most christian of bishops gently gathers the sweet flowers which peep forth on the green above it. The former ransacks antiquity and the hid-

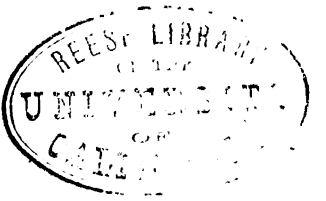
den corners of strange learning for his illustrations; the latter steals the ready smile of some sleeping child, or the modest bloom of a virgin cheek. The imagination of Sir Thomas Browne reflects the faded forms of old, half-forgotten things; that of Jeremy Taylor is overspread with the blushing tints of aërial beauty, like a lake beneath the sweetest sky of evening, in which the very multitude of lovely shadows prevent any one clear and majestic image from appearing unbroken. The first carries us out of ourselves into the grand abstractions of our nature; the last touches the pulses of individual joy, and awakens delicious musings and indistinct emotions of serious delight, such 'as make a chrysome child to smile.' In the works of Browne, we hear 'ancestral voices'; in those of Taylor, we listen to the sweet warblings of the angelic choir. Sir Thomas Browne does not shed sweet radiance on the stream of life; but he fathoms its most awful deeps, and thence discovers, that it rises not within the horizon of sense, but hath its source in other worlds, and will continue its mystic windings far beyond the shadows of death, which limit our present vision."



" These are sad sepulchral pitchers." p. 158.

En sum quod digitis quinque levatur onus.

PROPERTIUS.



TO MY

WORTHY AND HONORED FRIEND,

THOMAS LE GROS,

OF CROSTWICK, ESQ.

When the funeral pyre was out, and the last valediction over, men took a lasting adieu of their interred friends, little expecting the curiosity of future ages should comment upon their ashes; and having no old experience of the duration of their relics, held no opinion of such after-considerations.

But who knows the fate of his bones, or how often he is to be buried? Who hath the oracle of his ashes, or whither they are to be scattered? The relics of many lie, like the ruins of Pompey's,* in all parts of the earth; and these may seem to have wandered far, when they

* Pompeios juvenes Asia atque Europa, sed ipsum terra tegit Libyæ.

arrive at your hands, who, in a direct and meridian travel, have but a few miles of known earth between yourself and the pole.*

That the bones of Theseus should be seen again in Athens,† was not beyond conjecture and hopeful expectation; but that these should arise so opportunely to serve yourself, was a hit of fate and honor beyond prediction.

We cannot but wish these urns might have the effect of theatrical vessels, and great Hippodrome urns in Rome,‡ to resound the acclamations and honor due unto you. But these are sad and sepulchral pitchers, which have no joyful voices, silently expressing old mortality, the ruins of forgotten times, and can only speak with life, how long in this corruptible frame some parts may be uncorrupted, yet able to outlast bones long unborn, and noblest pile among us.

We present not these as any strange sight or spectacle unknown to your eyes, who have beheld the best of urns and noblest variety of ashes; who are yourself no slender master of antiquities, and can daily command the view of

* Little directly but sea between your house and Greenland.

† Brought back by Cimon. Plutarch.

‡ The great urns in the Hippodrome at Rome, conceived to resound the voices of the people at their shows.

so many imperial faces; * which raiseth your thoughts unto old things and consideration of times before you, when even living men were antiquities; when the living might exceed the dead, and to depart this world could not be properly said to go unto the greater number; † and so run up your thoughts upon the ancient of days, the antiquary's truest object, unto whom the eldest parcels are young, and earth itself an infant, and without Egyptian account ‡ makes but small noise in thousands.

We were hinted by the occasion, not catched the opportunity to write of old things, or intrude upon the antiquary. We are coldly drawn unto discourses of antiquities, who have scarce time before us to comprehend new things, or make out learned novelties. But seeing they arose as they lay, almost in silence among us, at least in short account suddenly passed over, we were very unwilling they should die again and be buried twice among us.

Besides, to preserve the living, and make the dead to live, to keep men out of their urns, and discourse of human fragments in them, is not impertinent unto our profession, whose study

* Worthily possessed by that true gentleman, Sir Horatio Townshend, my honored friend.

† Abiit ad plures.

‡ Which makes the world so many years old.

is life and death, who daily behold examples of mortality, and of all men least need artificial mementos or coffins by our bed-side to mind us of our graves.

'T is time to observe occurrences, and let nothing remarkable escape us. The supinity of elder days hath left so much in silence, or time hath so martyred the records, that the most industrious heads do find no easy work to erect a new Britannia.*

'T is opportune to look back upon old times and contemplate our forefathers. Great examples grow thin, and to be fetched from the passed world. Simplicity flies away, and iniquity comes at long strides upon us. We have enough to do to make up ourselves from present and passed times, and the whole stage of things scarce serveth for our instruction. A complete piece of virtue must be made up from the centos of all ages, as all the beauties of Greece could make but one handsome Venus.

When the bones of King Arthur were digged up,† the old race might think they beheld therein some originals of themselves. Unto these of our urns none here can pretend relation, and can only behold the relics of those

* Wherein Mr. Dugdale hath excellently well endeavoured.

† In the time of Henry the Second. Cambden.

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persons, who in their life giving the laws unto their predecessors, after long obscurity, now lie at their mercies. But remembering the early civility they brought upon these countries, and forgetting long-passed mischiefs, we mercifully preserve their bones, and insult not over their ashes.

In the offer of these antiquities, we drive not at ancient families, so long out-lasted by them; we are far from erecting your worth upon the pillars of your forefathers, whose merits you illustrate. We honor your old virtues, conformable unto times before you, which are the noblest armory. And having long experience of your friendly conversation, void of empty formality, full of freedom, constant and generous honesty, I look upon you as a gem of the old rock,* and must profess myself, even to urn and ashes,

Your ever faithful friend,

and servant,

THOMAS BROWNE.

NORWICH, MAY 1, 1658.

* Adamas de rupe veteri præstantissimus.

HYDRIOTAPHIA.*

CHAPTER I.

In the deep discovery of the subterranean world, a shallow part would satisfy some inquirers; who, if two or three yards were open about the surface, would not care to rake the bowels of Potosi, and regions towards the centre. Nature hath furnished one part of the earth, and man another. The treasures of time lie high, in urns, coins, and monuments, scarce below the roots of some vegetables. Time hath endless rarities, and shows of all varieties; which reveals old things in heaven, makes new discoveries in earth, and even earth itself a discovery. That great antiquity, America, lay buried for a thousand years; and a large part of the earth is still in the urn unto us.

* The original title was as follows: — "Hydriotaphia, Urn-Burial, or a Discourse of the Sepulchral Urns lately found in Norfolk."

Though if Adam were made out of an extract of the earth, all parts might challenge a restitution; yet few have returned their bones far lower than they might receive them; not affecting the graves of giants, under hilly and heavy coverings, but content with less than their own depth, have wished their bones might lie soft, and the earth be light upon them.* Even such as hope to rise again would not be content with central interment, or so desperately to place their relics as to lie beyond discovery and in no way to be seen again; which happy contrivance hath made communication with our forefathers, and left unto our view some parts which they never beheld themselves.

Though earth hath engrossed the name, yet water hath proved the smartest grave, which in forty days swallowed almost mankind and the living creation, fishes not wholly escaping, except the salt ocean were handsomely contempered by a mixture of the fresh element.

Many have taken voluminous pains to determine the state of the soul upon disunion; but men have been most fantastical in the singular contrivances of their corporal dissolution; whilst the soberest nations have rested in two ways, of simple inhumation and burning.

* Sit tibi terra levis.

That carnal interment or burying was of the elder date, the old examples of Abraham and the patriarchs are sufficient to illustrate, and were without competition, if it could be made out that Adam was buried near Damascus, or Mount Calvary, according to some tradition. God himself, that buried but one, was pleased to make choice of this way, collectible from Scripture expression and the hot contest between Satan and the Archangel about discovering the body of Moses. But the practice of burning was also of great antiquity, and of no slender extent. For (not to derive the same from Hercules) noble descriptions there are hereof in the Grecian funerals of Homer; in the formal obsequies of Patroclus and Achilles, and somewhat elder in the Theban war, and solemn combustion of Meneceus and Archemorus, contemporary unto Jair, the eighth judge of Israel; confirmable also among the Trojans from the funeral pyre of Hector, burnt before the gates of Troy, and the burning of Penthesilea, the Amazonian queen, and long continuance of that practice in the inward countries of Asia; while as low as the reign of Julian, we find that the king of Chionia * burnt the body of his son, and interred the ashes in a silver urn.

* Gumbrates, king of Chionia, a country near Persia.

The same practice extended also far west, and, besides Herulians, Getes, and Thracians, was in use with most of the Celtæ, Sarmatians, Germans, Gauls, Danes, Swedes, Norwegians, not to omit some use thereof among Carthaginians and Americans; of greater antiquity among the Romans than most opinion, or Pliny seems to allow. For (besides the old table laws of burning or burying within the city,* of making the funeral fire with planed wood, or quenching the fire with wine,) Manlius, the consul, burnt the body of his son. Numa, by special clause of his will, was not burnt, but buried; and Remus was solemnly buried, according to the description of Ovid.†

Cornelius Sylla was not the first whose body was burned in Rome, but of the Cornelian family, which being indifferently, not frequently used before, from that time spread, and became the prevalent practice; not totally pursued in the highest run of cremation; for when even crows were funerally burnt, Poppæa, the wife of Nero, found a peculiar grave interment. Now as all customs were founded upon some bottom of reason, so there wanted not

* 12 Tab. Pars i. de jure sacro. Hominem mortuum in urbe ne sepelito, neve urito. tom. 2. Rogum asciâ ne polito. tom. 4.

† Ultima prolato subdita flamma rogo.

grounds for this, according to several apprehensions of the most rational dissolution. Some, being of the opinion of Thales, that water was the original of all things, thought it most equal to submit unto the principle of putrefaction, and conclude in a moist relentment. Others conceived it most natural to end in fire, as due unto the master principle in the composition, according to the doctrine of Heraclitus; and therefore heaped up large piles, more actively to waft them toward that element, whereby they also declined a visible degeneration into worms, and left a lasting parcel of their composition.

Some apprehended a purifying virtue in fire, refining the grosser commixture, and firing out the ethereal particles so deeply immersed in it; and such as by tradition or rational conjecture held any hint of the final pyre of all things, or that this element at last must be too hard for all the rest, might conceive most naturally of the fiery dissolution. Others, pretending no natural grounds, politickly declined the malice of enemies upon their buried bodies; which consideration led Sylla unto this practice, who having thus served the body of Marius, could not but fear a retaliation upon his own, entertained after in the civil wars and revengeful contentions of Rome.

But as many nations embraced, and many left it indifferent, so others too much affected or strictly declined this practice. The Indian Brachmans seemed too great friends unto fire, who burnt themselves alive, and thought it the noblest way to end their days in fire; according to the expression of the Indian, burning himself at Athens, in his last words upon the pyre unto the amazed spectators, "Thus I make myself immortal."

But the Chaldeans, the great idolaters of fire, abhorred the burning of their carcasses, as a pollution of that deity. The Persian Magi declined it upon the like scruple, and being only solicitous about their bones, exposed their flesh to the prey of birds and dogs. And the Parsees now in India, which expose their bodies unto vultures, and endure not so much as "feretra" or biers of wood, the proper fuel of fire, are led on with such niceties. But whether the ancient Germans, who burned their dead, held any such fear to pollute their deity of Herthus, or the earth, we have no authentic conjecture.

The Egyptians were afraid of fire, not as a deity, but a devouring element, mercilessly consuming their bodies, and leaving too little of them; and therefore, by precious embalments, deposture in dry earths, or handsome

enclosure in glasses, contrived the notablest ways of integral conservation; and from such Egyptian scruples, imbibed by Pythagoras, it may be conjectured that Numa and the Pythagorical sect first waved the fiery solution.

The Scythians, who swore by wind and sword, that is, by life and death, were so far from burning their bodies, that they declined all interment, and made their graves in the air; and the Ichthyophagi, or fish-eating nations about Egypt, affected the sea for their grave, thereby declining visible corruption, and restoring the debt of their bodies. Whereas the old heroes in Homer dreaded nothing more than water or drowning, probably upon the old opinion of the fiery substance of the soul, only extinguishable by that element; and therefore the poet emphatically implieth the total destruction in this kind of death,* which happened to Ajax Oileus.

The old Balearians had a peculiar mode, for they used great urns and much wood, but no fire in their burials, while they bruised the flesh and bones of the dead, crowded them into urns, and laid heaps of wood upon them. And the Chinese, without cremation or urnal interment of their bodies, make use of trees and much burning, while they plant a pine tree by

* Which Magius reads ἐξαπίλωλε.

their grave, and burn great numbers of printed draughts of slaves and horses over it, civilly content with their companies in effigy, which barbarous nations exact unto reality.

Christians abhorred this way of obsequies, and though they sticked not to give their bodies to be burnt in their lives, detested that mode after death; affecting rather a deposture than absumption, and properly submitting unto the sentence of God, to return not unto ashes, but unto dust again, conformable unto the practice of the patriarchs, the interment of our Saviour, of Peter, Paul, and the ancient martyrs; and so far at last declining promiscuous interment with Pagans, that some have suffered ecclesiastical censures* for making no scruple thereof.

The Mussulman believers will never admit this fiery resolution; for they hold a present trial from their black and white angels in the grave, which they must have made so hollow that they may rise upon their knees.

The Jewish nation, though they entertained the old way of inhumation, yet sometimes admitted this practice. For the men of Jabesh burnt the body of Saul; and, by no prohibited practice, to avoid contagion or pollution in time of pestilence, burnt the bodies of their friends.†

* Martialis, the Bishop. Cyprian.

† Amos vi. 10.

And when they burnt not their dead bodies, yet sometimes used great burnings near and about them, deducible from the expressions concerning Jehoram, Zedechiah, and the sumptuous pyre of Asia; and were so little averse from Pagan burning, that the Jews, lamenting the death of Cæsar, their friend and revenger on Pompey, frequented the place where his body was burnt, for many nights together.* And as they raised noble monuments and mausoleums for their own nation,† so they were not scrupulous in erecting some for others, according to the practice of Daniel, who left that lasting sepulchral pile in Ecbatana for the Median and Persian kings. ‡

But even in times of subjection and hottest use, they conformed not unto the Roman practice of burning; whereby the prophecy was secured concerning the body of Christ, that it should not see corruption, or a bone should not be broken; which we believe was also providentially prevented, from the soldier's spear and nails that past by the little bones both in his

* Sueton in vitâ. Jul. Cæs.

‡ As that magnificent sepulchral monument erected by Simon. 1 Macc. xiii, 27.

* Κατασκευασμα θαυμασιως πεποιημενον, whereof a Jewish priest had always the custody unto Josephus's days Jos. b. 10, Antiq.

hands and feet; not of ordinary contrivance, that it should not corrupt on the cross, according to the laws of Roman crucifixion, or a hair of his head perish, though observable in Jewish customs to cut the hairs of malefactors.

Nor in their long cohabitation with Egyptians, crept into a custom of their exact embalming, wherein deeply slashing the muscles, and taking out the brains and entrails, they had broken the subject of so entire a resurrection, nor fully answered the types of Enoch, Elijah, or Jonah; which yet to prevent or restore, was of equal facility unto that rising power, able to break the fasciations and bands of death, to get clear out of the cerecloth and a hundred pounds of ointment, and out of the sepulchre before the stone was rolled from it.

But though they embraced not this practice of burning, yet entertained they many ceremonies agreeable unto Greek and Roman obsequies. And he that observeth their funeral feasts, their lamentations at the grave, their music, and weeping mourners; how they closed the eyes of their friends; how they washed, anointed, and kissed the dead; may easily conclude these were not mere Pagan civilities. But whether that mournful burthen, and treble calling out after Absalom,* had any reference

* O Absalom, Absalom, Absalom! 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

unto the last conclamation and triple valediction used by other nations, we hold but a wavering conjecture.

Civilians make sepulture but of the law of nations; others do naturally found it and discover it also in animals. (They that are so thick-skinned as still to credit the story of the phenix, may say something for animal burning.) More serious conjectures find some examples of sepulture in elephants, cranes, the sepulchral cells of pismires, and practice of bees; which civil society carrieth out their dead, and hath exequies, if not interments.

CHAPTER II.

THE solemnities, ceremonies, rites of their cremation or interment, so solemnly delivered by authors, we shall not disparage our reader to repeat. Only the last and lasting part in their urns, collected bones and ashes, we cannot wholly omit, or decline that subject, which occasion lately presented in some discovered among us.

In a field of Old Walsingham, not many months past, were digged up between forty and fifty urns, deposited in a dry and sandy soil, not a yard deep, not far from one another; not all strictly of one figure, but most answering these described; * some containing two pounds of bones, distinguishable in skulls, ribs, jaws, thigh-bones, and teeth, with fresh impressions of their combustion; besides the extraneous substances, like pieces of small boxes, or combs, handsomely wrought, handles of small brass instruments, brazen nippers, and in one some kind of opal.

Near the same plot of ground, for about six yards' compass, were digged up coals and incinerated substances, which begat conjecture that this was the Ustrina, or place of burning their bodies, or some sacrificing place unto the Manes,

* On page 156.

which was properly below the surface of the ground, as the aræ and altars unto the gods and heroes above it.

That these were the urns of Romans, from the common custom and place where they were found, is no obscure conjecture; not far from a Roman garrison, and but five miles from Brancaster, set down by ancient record under the name of Brannodunum; and where the adjoining town, containing seven parishes, in no very different sound, but Saxon termination, still retains the name of Burnham; which, being an early station, it is not improbable the neighbour parts were filled with habitations, either of Romans themselves, or Britons Romanized, which observed the Roman customs.

Nor is it improbable that the Romans early possessed this country; for, though we meet not with such strict particulars of these parts, before the new institution of Constantine, and military charge of the Count of the Saxon shore, and that about the Saxon invasions, the Dalmatian horsemen were in the garrison of Brancaster; yet, in the time of Claudius, Vespasian, and Severus, we find no less than three legions dispersed through the province of Britain; and, as high as the reign of Claudius, a great overthrow was given unto the Iceni, by the Roman lieutenant Ostorius. Not

long after, the country was so molested, that in hope of a better state, Prasutagus bequeathed his kingdom unto Nero and his daughters; and Boadicea, his queen, fought the last decisive battle with Paullinus. After which time and conquest of Agricola, the lieutenant of Vespasian, probable it is they wholly possessed this country, ordering it into garrisons or habitations best suitable with their securities; and so some Roman habitations not improbable in these parts, as high as the time of Vespasian, where the Saxons after seated, in whose thin-filled maps we yet find the name of Walsingham. Now, if the Iceni were but Gammadims, Anconians, or men that lived in an angle, wedge, or elbow of Britian, according to the original etymology, this country will challenge the emphatical appellation, as most properly making the elbow or iken of Icenia.

That Britain was notably populous, is undeniable, from that expression of Cæsar.* That the Romans themselves were early in no small numbers, seventy thousand, with their associates, slain by Boadicea, affords a sure account. And though not many Roman habitations are now known, yet some by old works, rampires, coins, and urns, do testify their posses-

* Hominum infinita multitudo est, creberrimaque ædificia fere Gallicis consimilia. Cæs. de Bello Gal. l. 5.

sions. Some urns have been found at Castor, some also about Southcreek, and, not many years past, no less than ten in a field at Buxton, not near any recorded garrison. Nor is it strange to find Roman coins of copper and silver among us, of Vespasian, Trajan, Adrian, Commodus, Antoninus, Severus, &c.; but the greater number of Diocletian, Constantine, Constans, Valens, with many of Victorinus Posthumius, Tetricus, and the thirty tyrants in the reign of Gallienus; and some as high as Adrianus have been found about Thetford, or Sitomagus, mentioned in the itinerary of Antoninus, as the way from Venta or Castor unto London. But the most frequent discovery is made at the two Casters, by Norwich and Yarmouth, at Burghcastle and Brancaster.

Besides the Norman, Saxon, and Danish pieces of Cuthred, Canutus, William, Matilda, and others, some British coins of gold have been dispersedly found; and no small number of silver pieces near Norwich, with a rude head upon the obverse, and an ill-formed horse on the reverse, with these inscriptions, *Ic. Duro. T.*, whether implying Iceni, Durotriges, Tascia or Trinobantes, we leave to higher conjecture. Vulgar chronology will have Norwich castle as old as Julius Cæsar; but his distance from these parts, and its Gothic form of structure,

abridgeth such antiquity. The British coins afford conjecture of early habitation in these parts; though the city of Norwich arose from the ruins of Venta, and though perhaps not without some habitation before, was enlarged, builded, and nominated by the Saxons. In what bulk or populosity it stood in the old East-Angle monarchy, tradition and history are silent. Considerable it was in the Danish eruptions, when Sueno burnt Thetford and Norwich, and Ulfketel, the governor thereof, was able to make some resistance, and after endeavoured to burn the Danish navy.

How the Romans left so many coins in countries of their conquests, seems of hard resolution, except we consider how they buried them under ground, when, upon barbarous invasions, they were fain to desert their habitations in most part of their empire, and the strictness of their laws forbidding to transfer them to any other uses; wherein the Spartans were singular, who, to make their copper money useless, contempered it with vinegar. That the Britons left any, some wonder, since their money was iron and iron rings before Cæsar; and those of after stamp by permission, and but small in bulk and bigness. That so few of the Saxons remain, neither need any wonder, because, overcome by succeeding conquerors upon the

U... C...

place, their coins by degrees passed into other stamps, and the marks of after ages.

Than the time of these urns deposited, or precise antiquity of these relics, nothing is of more uncertainty; for since the lieutenant of Claudius seems to have made the first progress into these parts, since Boadicea was overthrown by the forces of Nero, and Agricola put a full end to these conquests, it is not probable the country was fully garrisoned or planted before; and therefore, however these urns might be of later date, it is not likely they were of higher antiquity.

And the succeeding emperors desisted not from their conquests in these and other parts, as testified by history and medal inscription yet extant; the province of Britain, in so divided a distance from Rome, beholding the faces of many imperial persons, and in large account no fewer than Cæsar, Claudius, Britannicus, Vespasian, Titus, Adrian, Severus, Commodus, Geta, and Caracalla.

A great obscurity herein, because no medal or emperor's coin enclosed, which might denote the date of their interments; — observable in many urns, and found in those of Spittle-fields, by London; * which contained the coins of

* Stowe's Survey of London.

Claudius, Vespasian, Commodus, Antoninus, attended with lacrymatories, lamps, bottles of liquor, and other appurtenances of affectionate superstition, which in these rural interments were wanting.

Some uncertainty there is from the period or term of burning, or the cessation of that practice. Macrobius affirmeth it was disused in his days; but most agree, though without authentic record, that it ceased with the Antonini, — most safely to be understood after the reign of those emperors who assumed the name of Antoninus, extending unto Heliogabalus; — Not strictly after Marcus; for about fifty years later we find the magnificent burning and consecration of Severus; and if we so fix this period of cessation, these urns will challenge above 1300 years.

But whether this practice was only then left by emperors and great persons, or generally about Rome, and not in other provinces, we hold no authentic account. For after Tertullian, in the days of Minucius, it was obviously objected upon Christians, that they condemned the practice of burning.* And we find a passage in Sidonius, which asserteth that practice in France unto a lower account; and perhaps

* Execrantur rogos, et damnant ignium sepulturam.

not fully disused till Christianity was fully established, which gave the final extinction to these sepulchral bonefires.

Whether they were the bones of men, or women, or children, no authentic decision from ancient custom in distinct places of burial; although not improbably conjectured, that the double sepulture, or burying-place of Abraham,* had in it such intention. But from exility of bones, thinness of skulls, smallness of teeth, ribs, and thigh-bones, not improbable that many thereof were persons of minor age, or women; confirmable also from things contained in them. In most were found substances resembling combs, plates like boxes, fastened with iron pins, and handsomely overwrought like the necks or bridges of musical instruments, long brass plates overwrought like the handles of neat implements, brazen nippers to pull away hair, and in one a kind of opal yet maintaining a bluish color.

Now that they accustomed to burn or bury with them things wherein they excelled, delighted, or which were dear unto them, either as farewells unto all pleasure, or vain apprehension that they might use them in the other world, is testified by all antiquity; — observable

* Gen. xxiii. In the cave of a field called Hebron, in the land of Canaan.

from the gem or beryl ring upon the finger of Cynthia, the mistress of Propertius, when after her funeral pyre her ghost appeared unto him; — and notably illustrated from the contents of that Roman urn preserved by Cardinal Farnese, wherein, besides great number of gems with heads of gods and goddesses, were found an ape of agate, a grasshopper, an elephant of amber, a chrystal ball, three glasses, two spoons, and six nuts of crystal. And beyond the content of urns, in the monument of Childeric the First, and fourth king from Pharamond, casually discovered three years past at Tournay, restoring unto the world much gold richly adorning his sword, two hundred rubies, many hundred imperial coins, three hundred golden bees, the bones and horse-shoes of his horse interred with him, according to the barbarous magnificence of those days in their sepulchral obsequies. Although if we steer by the conjecture of many, and Septuagint expression, some trace thereof may be found even with the ancient Hebrews, not only from the sepulchral treasure of David, but the circumcision knives which Joshua also buried.

Some men, considering the contents of these urns, lasting pieces and toys included in them, and the custom of burning with many other nations, might somewhat doubt whether all

urns found among us were properly Roman relics, or some not belonging unto our British, Saxon, or Danish forefathers.

Of the form of burial among the ancient Britons, the large discourses of Cæsar, Tacitus, and Strabo are silent. For the discovery whereof, with other particulars, we much deplore the loss of that letter which Cicero expected or received from his brother Quintus, as a resolution of British customs; or the account which might have been made by Scribonius Largus, the physician accompanying the emperor Claudius, who might have also discovered that frugal bit of the old Britons, which in the bigness of a bean could satisfy their thirst and hunger.

But that the Druids and ruling priests used to burn and bury, is expressed by Pomponius. That Bellinus, the brother of Brennus, and king of the Britons, was burnt, is acknowledged by Polydorus, as also by Amandus Zierexensis in Historia, and Pineda in his Universa Historia, (Spanish.) That they held that practice in Gallia, Cæsar expressly delivereth. Whether the Britons (probably descended from them, of like religion, language, and manners) did not sometimes make use of burning; or whether at least such as were after civilized unto the Roman life and manners, conformed not unto

this practice, we have no historical assertion or denial. But since, from the account of Tacitus, the Romans early wrought so much civility upon the British stock, that they brought them to build temples, to wear the gown, and study the Roman laws and language; that they conformed also unto their religious rites and customs in burials, seems no improbable conjecture.

That burning the dead was used in Sarmatia, is affirmed by Gaguinus; that the Sueons and Gothlanders used to burn their princes and great persons, is delivered by Saxo and Olaus; that this was the old German practice, is also asserted by Tacitus. And though we are bare in historical particulars of such obsequies in this island, or that the Saxons, Jutes, and Angles burnt their dead, yet came they from parts where it was of ancient practice; the Germans using it, from whom they were descended. And even in Jutland and Sleswick in Anglia Cymbrica, urns with bones were found not many years before us.

But the Danish and Northern nations have raised an era or point of compute from their custom of burning their dead; some deriving it from Unguinus, some from Frotho the Great, who ordained by law that princes and chief commanders should be committed unto the fire,

though the common sort had the common grave-interment. So Starkatterus, that old hero, was burnt; and Ringo royally burnt the body of Harold, the king slain by him.

What time this custom generally expired in that nation, we discern no assured period; whether it ceased before Christianity, or upon their conversion by Ausgurius the Gaul, in the time of Ludovicus Pius, the son of Charles the Great, according to good computes; or whether it might not be used by some persons, while for a hundred and eighty years Paganism and Christianity were promiscuously embraced among them, there is no assured conclusion. About which times the Danes were busy in England, and particularly infested this country; where many castles and strong holds were built by them or against them, and great numbers of names and families still derived from them. But since this custom was probably disused before their invasion or conquest, and the Romans confessedly practised the same since their possession of this island, the most assured account will fall upon the Romans, or Britons Romanized.

However, certain it is that urns, conceived of no Roman original, are often digged up both in Norway and Denmark, handsomely described and graphically represented by the learned phy-

sician Wormius; and in some parts of Denmark in no ordinary number, as stands delivered by authors exactly describing those countries. And they contained not only bones, but many other substances in them, as knives, pieces of iron, brass, and wood, and one of Norway a brass gilded jewsharp.

Nor were they confused or careless in disposing the noblest sort, while they placed large stones in circle about the urns or bodies which they interred, somewhat answerable unto the monument of Rollwich stones in England, or sepulchral monument probably erected by Rollo, who after conquered Normandy, where it is not improbable somewhat might be discovered. Meanwhile, to what nation or person belonged that large urn found at Ashbury, containing mighty bones and a buckler; what those large urns found at Little Massingham; or why the Anglesea urns are placed with their mouths downward, remains yet undiscovered.

CHAPTER III.

PLASTERED and whited sepulchres were anciently affected in cadaverous and corruptive burials; and the rigid Jews were wont to garnish the sepulchres of the righteous. Ulysses, in Hecuba, cared not how meanly he lived, so he might find a noble tomb after death. Great princes affected great monuments; and the fair and larger urns contained no vulgar ashes, which makes that disparity in those which time discovereth among us. The present urns were not of one capacity; the largest containing above a gallon; some not much above half that measure. Nor all of one figure, wherein there is no strict conformity in the same or different countries; observable from those represented by Casalius, Bosio, and others, though all found in Italy; while many have handles, ears, and long necks, but most imitate a circular figure, in a spherical and round composure; whether from any mystery, best duration, or capacity, were but a conjecture. But the common form with necks was a proper figure, making our last bed like our first; not much unlike the urns of our nativity, while "we lay in the nether part of the earth," (Ps. cxxxix.) and inward vault of our microcosm.

Many urns are red, these but of a black color, somewhat smooth, and dully sounding, which begat some doubt whether they were burnt, or only baken in oven or sun, according to the ancient way, in many bricks, tiles, pots, and testaceous works; and as the word "testa" is properly to be taken, when occurring without addition, and chiefly intended by Pliny when he commendeth bricks and tiles of two years old, and to make them in the spring. Nor only these concealed pieces, but the open magnificence of antiquity, ran much in the artifice of clay. Hereof the house of Mausolus was built; thus old Jupiter stood in the Capitol; and the statue of Hercules, made in the reign of Tarquinius Priscus, was extant in Pliny's days. And such as declined burning or funeral urns, affected coffins of clay, according to the mode of Pythagoras, a way preferred by Varro. But the spirit of great ones was above these circumscriptions, affecting copper, silver, gold, and porphyry urns, wherein Severus lay, after a serious view and sentence on that which should contain him. Some of these urns were thought to have been silvered over from sparklings in several pots, with small tinsel parcels, uncertain whether from the earth or the first mixture in them.

Among these urns we could obtain no good account of their coverings; only one seemed

arched over with some kind of brick-work. Of those found at Buxton, some were covered with flints; some in other parts with tiles; those at Yarmouth-Caster were closed with Roman bricks; and some have proper earthen covers adapted and fitted to them. But in the Homerical urn of Patroclus, whatever was the solid tegument, we find the immediate covering to be a purple piece of silk. And such as had no covers might have the earth closely pressed into them; after which disposure were probably some of these, wherein we found the bones and ashes half mortared unto the sand and sides of the urn, and some long roots of quich, or dog's-grass, wreathed about the bones.

No lamps, included liquors, lachrymatories, or tear-bottles, attended these rural urns, either as sacred unto the Manes, or passionate expressions of their surviving friends; while with rich flames and hired tears they solemnized their obsequies, and in the most lamented monuments made one part of their inscriptions.* Some find sepulchral vessels containing liquors which time hath incrassated into jellies. For besides these lachrymatories, notable lamps, with vessels of oils and aromatical liquors, attended noble ossuaries, and some yet retaining a

* Cum lacrymis posuêre.

vinosity and spirit in them; which if any have tasted, they have far exceeded the palates of antiquity; liquors not to be computed by years of annual magistrates, but by great conjunctions and the fatal periods of kingdoms.* The draughts of consulary date were but crude unto these, and Opimian† wine but in the must unto them.

In sundry graves and sepulchres, we meet with rings, coins, and chalices. Ancient frugality was so severe, that they allowed no gold to attend the corpses, but only that which served to fasten their teeth.‡ Whether the opaline stone in this urn were burnt upon the finger of the dead, or cast into the fire by some affectionate friend, it will consist with either custom. But other incinerable substances were found so fresh, that they could feel no singe from fire. These upon view were judged to be wood; but sinking in water, and tried by the fire we found them to be bone or ivory. In their hardness and yellow color, they most resembled box, which, in old expressions, found the epithet §

* About 500 years. Plato.

† Vinum Opiminianum annorum centum. Petron.

‡ 12 Tabul. l. xi, de jure sacro. Neve aurum addito; ast quo auro dentes vincti erunt, imo cum illo sepelire et urere, ne fraudi esto.

§ Plin. lib. xvi. Inter ξύλα ἀσαπῆ numerat Theophrastus.

of eternal, and perhaps, in such conservatories, might have passed uncorrupted.

That bay-leaves were found green in the tomb of St. Humbert, after a hundred and fifty years, was looked upon as miraculous. Remarkable it was unto old spectators, that the cypress of the temple of Diana lasted so many hundred years. The wood of the ark and olive rod of Aaron were older at the captivity. But the cypress of the ark of Noah was the greatest vegetable antiquity, if Josephus were not deceived by some fragments of it in his days; — to omit the moor-logs and fir-trees, found under ground in many parts of England; the undated ruins of winds, floods, and earthquakes; and which, in Flanders, still show from what quarter they fell, as generally lying in a northeast position.

But though we found not these pieces to be wood, according to first apprehension, yet we missed not altogether of some woody substance; for the bones were not so clearly picked, but some coals were found amongst them; — a way to make wood perpetual, and a fit associate for metal, whereon was laid the foundation of the great Ephesian temple, and which were made the lasting tests of old boundaries and landmarks. Whilst we look on these, we admire not observations of coals found fresh after four

hundred years. In a long deserted habitation, even egg-shells have been found fresh, not tending to corruption.

In the monument of King Childeric, the iron relics were found all rusty and crumbling into pieces. But our little iron pins, which fastened the ivory works, held well together, and lost not their magnetical quality, though wanting a tenacious moisture for the firmer union of parts. Although it be hardly drawn into fusion, yet that metal soon submitteth unto rust and dissolution. In the brazen pieces we admired not the duration, but the freedom from rust and ill savor upon the hardest attrition; but now exposed unto the piercing atoms of air, in the space of a few months they begin to spot and betray their green entrails. We conceive not these urns to have descended thus naked as they appear, or to have entered their graves without the old habit of flowers. The urn of Philopœmen was so laden with flowers and ribbons, that it afforded no sight of itself. The rigid Lycurgus allowed olive and myrtle. The Athenians might fairly except against the practice of Democritus, to be buried up in honey; as fearing to embezzle a great commodity of their country, and the best of that kind in Europe. But Plato seemed too frugally politic, who allowed no larger monument than

would contain four heroic verses, and designed the most barren ground for sepulture; though we cannot commend the goodness of that sepulchral ground which was set at no higher rate than the mean salary of Judas. Though the earth had confounded the ashes of these ossuaries, yet the bones were so smartly burnt, that some thin plates of brass were found half melted among them; whereby we apprehend, they were not of the meanest carcasses, perfunctorily fired, as sometimes in military, and commonly in pestilence burnings, or after the manner of abject corpses, huddled forth and carelessly burnt, without the Esquiline Port at Rome; which was an affront continued upon Tiberius, while they but half burnt his body, and in the amphitheatre, according to the custom in notable malefactors; whereas Nero seemed not so much to fear his death, as that his head should be cut off, and his body not burnt entire.

Some finding many fragments of skulls in these urns, suspected a mixture of bones. In none we searched was there cause of such conjecture, though sometimes they declined not that practice. The ashes of Domitian were mingled with those of Julia, of Achilles with those of Patroclus. All urns contained not single ashes. Without confused burnings, they effectually compounded their bones, passionately

endeavouring to continue their living unions; and when distance of death denied such conjunctions, unsatisfied affections conceived some satisfaction to be neighbours in the grave, to lie urn by urn, and touch but in their names. And many were so curious to continue their living relations, that they contrived large and family urns, wherein the ashes of their nearest friends and kindred might successively be received, at least some parcels thereof, while their collateral memorials lay in minor vessels about them.

Antiquity held too light thoughts from objects of mortality, while some drew provocatives of mirth from anatomies,* and jugglers showed tricks with skeletons; when fiddlers made not so pleasant mirth as fencers, and men could sit with quiet stomachs while hanging was played before them.† Old considerations made few mementos by skulls and bones upon their monuments. In the Egyptian obelisks and hieroglyphical figures, it is not easy to meet with bones. The sepulchral lamps speak nothing

* Sic erimus cuncti &c. Ergo, dum vivimus, vivamus.

† Ἀγχόνην παίζειν. A barbarous pastime at feasts, when men stood upon a rolling globe, with their necks in a rope, and a knife in their hands, ready to cut it when the stone was rolled away, wherein if they failed, they lost their lives, to the laughter of the spectators. Athenæus.

less than sepulture, and in their literal draughts prove often obscene and antic pieces. Where we find D. M.* it is obvious to meet with sacrificing "pateras," and vessels of libation, upon old sepulchral monuments. In the Jewish Hypogæum and subterranean cell at Rome, was little observable beside the variety of lamps, and frequent draughts of the holy candlestick. In authentic draughts of Antony and Jerome, we meet with thigh bones, and death's-heads; but the cemeterial cells of ancient Christians and martyrs were filled with draughts of Scripture stories; not declining the flourishes of cypress, palms, and olive, and the mystical figures of peacocks, doves, and cocks; but iterately affecting the portraits of Enoch, Lazarus, Jonas, and the vision of Ezekiel, as hopeful draughts and hinting imagery of the resurrection, — which is the life of the grave, and sweetens our habitations in the land of moles and pismires.

Gentile inscriptions precisely delivered the extent of men's lives, seldom the manner of their deaths, which history itself so often leaves obscure in the records of memorable persons. There is scarce any philosopher but dies twice or thrice in Laërtius; nor almost any life

* Diis Manibus.

without two or three deaths in Plutarch; which makes the tragical ends of noble persons more favorably resented by compassionate readers, who find some relief in the election of such differences.

The certainty of death is attended with uncertainties, in time, manner, places. The variety of monuments hath often obscured true graves, and cenotaphs confounded sepulchres. For beside their real tombs, many have found honorary and empty sepulchres. The variety of Homer's monuments made him of various countries. Euripides had his tomb in Africa, but his sepulture in Macedonia. And Severus found his real sepulture in Rome, but his empty grave in Gallia.

He that lay in a golden urn * eminently above the earth, was not like to find the quiet of these bones. Many of these urns were broke by a vulgar discoverer in hope of enclosed treasure. The ashes of Marcellus were lost above ground upon the like account. Where profit hath prompted, no age hath wanted such miners; for which the most barbarous expilators found the most civil rhetoric. Gold once out of the earth is no more due unto it. What was unreasonably committed to the ground is

* Trajanus. Dion.

reasonably resumed from it. Let monuments and rich fabrics, not riches, adorn men's ashes. The commerce of the living is not to be transferred unto the dead. It is not injustice to take that which none complains to lose, and no man is wronged where no man is possessor.*

What virtue yet sleeps in this "terra damnata" and aged cinders, were petty magic to experiment. These crumbling relics and long-fired particles supersannuate such expectations. Bones, hairs, nails, and teeth of the dead, were the treasures of old sorcerers. In vain we revive such practices; present superstition too visibly perpetuates the folly of our forefathers, wherein unto old observation this island was so complete, that it might have instructed Persia.†

Plato's historian of the other world lies twelve days uncorrupted, while his soul was viewing the large stations of the dead. How to keep the corpse seven days from corruption, by anointing and washing, without exenteration, were a hazardable piece of art in our choicest practice. How they made distinct separation of bones and ashes from fiery admixture, hath

* The commission of the Gothic king Theodoric, for finding out sepulchral treasure. Cassiodor. Var. lib. 4.

† Britannia hodie eam attonite celebrat tantis ceremoniis, ut dedisse Persis videri possit. Plin. lib. 30.

found no historical solution; though they seemed to make a distinct collection, and overlooked not Pyrrhus's toe.* Some provision they might make by fictile vessels, coverings, tiles, or flat stones upon and about the body, (and in the same field, not far from those urns, many stones were found under ground,) as also by careful separation of extraneous matter, composing and raking up the burnt bones with forks, — observable in that notable lump of Galvanus Martianus, who had the sight of the "vas ustrinum," or vessel wherein they burnt the dead, found in the Esquiline field at Rome, might have afforded clearer solution. But their insatisfaction herein begat that remarkable invention in the funeral pyres of some princes, by incombustible sheets made with a texture of asbestos, incremable flax, or salamander's wool, which preserved their bones and ashes incommixed.

How the bulk of a man should sink into so few pounds of bones and ashes, may seem strange unto any who considers not its constitution, and how slender a mass will remain upon an open and urging fire of the carnal composition. Even bones themselves, reduced into ashes, do abate a notable proportion; and consisting much of a volatile salt, when that is

* Which could not be burnt.

fired out, make a light kind of cinders; although their bulk be disproportionable to their weight, when the heavy principle of salt is fired out, and the earth almost only remaineth; — observable in sallow, which makes more ashes than oak, and discovers the common fraud of selling ashes by measure, and not by ponderation.

Some bones make best skeletons,* some bodies quick and speediest ashes.† Who would expect a quick flame from hydropical Heraclitus? The poisoned soldier, when his belly brake, put out two pyres, in Plutarch. But in the plague of Athens, one private pyre served two or three intruders; and the Saracens, burnt in large heaps by the king of Castile, show how little fuel sufficeth. Though the funeral pyre of Patroclus took up a hundred feet,‡ a piece of an old boat burnt Pompey; and if the burthen of Isaac were sufficient for a holocaust, a man may carry his own pyre.

From animals are drawn good burning lights, and good medicines against burning. Though the seminal humor seems of a contrary nature to fire, yet the body completed proves a combustible lump, wherein fire finds flame even

* Old bones, according to Lyserus.

† Those of young persons not tall nor fat, according to Columbus.

‡ Ἑκατόμπεδον ἴσθι καὶ ἴσθι.

from bones, and some fuel almost from all parts; though the metropolis of humidity * seems least disposed unto it, which might render the skulls of these urns less burned than other bones. But all flies or sinks before fire almost in all bodies. When the common ligament is dissolved, the attenuable parts ascend; the rest subside in coal, calx, or ashes.

To burn the bones of the king of Edom for lime (Amos ii. 1.) seems no irrational ferity; but to drink of the ashes of dead relations, † a passionate prodigality. (He that hath the ashes of his friend, hath an everlasting treasure.) Where fire taketh leave, corruption slowly enters. In bones well burnt, fire makes a wall against itself, experimented in copels and tests of metals, which consist of such ingredients. What the sun compoundeth, fire analyseth, not transmuteth. That devouring agent leaves almost always a morsel for the earth, whereof all things are but a colony, and which, if time permits, the mother element will have in their primitive mass again.

He that looks for urns and old sepulchral relics, must not seek them in the ruins of temples, where no religion anciently placed them. These were found in a field, according to an-

* The brain. Hippocrates.

† As Artemisia of her husband Mausolus.

cient custom, in noble or private burial; the old practice of the Canaanites, the family of Abraham, and the burying-place of Joshua, in the borders of his possessions; and also agreeable unto Roman practice to bury by highways, whereby their monuments were under eye, memorials of themselves and mementos of mortality unto living passengers; whom the epitaphs of great ones were fain to beg to stay and look upon them, — a language, though sometimes used, not so proper in church inscriptions.* The sensible rhetoric of the dead, to exemplarity of good life, first admitted the bones of pious men and martyrs within church walls, which, in succeeding ages, crept into promiscuous practice. While Constantine was peculiarly favored to be admitted unto the church porch; and the first thus buried in England was in the days of Cuthred.

Christians dispute how their bodies should lie in the grave. In urnal interment they clearly escaped this controversy. Though we decline the religious consideration, yet in cemeterial and narrower burying-places, to avoid confusion and cross position, a certain posture were to be admitted; which even Pagan civility observed. The Persians lay north and south; the Megarians and Phœnicians placed their

* Siste, viator.

heads to the east; the Athenians, some think, towards the west, which Christians still retain; and Beda will have it to be the posture of our Saviour. That he was crucified with his face towards the west, we will not contend with tradition and probable account; but we applaud not the hand of the painter in exalting his cross so high above those on either side, since hereof we find no authentic account in history, and even the crosses found by Helena pretend no such distinction from longitude or dimension.

To be knaved out of our graves, to have our skulls made drinking-bowls, and our bones turned into pipes, to delight and sport our enemies, are tragical abominations escaped in burning burials.

Urnal interments and burnt relics lie not in fear of worms, or to be a heritage for serpents. In carnal sepulture corruptions seem peculiar unto parts, and some speak of snakes out of the spinal marrow. But while we suppose common worms in graves, 't is not easy to find any there; few in church-yards above a foot deep; fewer, or none, in churches, though in fresh decayed bodies. Teeth, bones, and hair, give the most lasting defiance to corruption.

In a hydropical body, ten years buried in a church-yard, we met with a fat concretion, where the nitre of the earth, and the salt and

lixivious liquor of the body, had coagulated large lumps of fat into the consistence of the hardest Castile soap; whereof part remaineth with us.

After a battle with the Persians, the Roman corpses decayed in a few days, while the Persian bodies remained dry and uncorrupted.

Bodies in the same ground do not uniformly dissolve, nor bones equally moulder; whereof, in the opprobrious disease, we expect no long duration.

The body of the Marquis of Dorset seemed sound and handsomely cereclothed, that after seventy-eight years was found uncorrupted.* Common tombs preserve not beyond powder. A firmer consistence and compage of parts might be expected from arefaction, deep burial, or charcoal. The greatest antiquities of mortal bodies may remain in petrified bones, whereof, though we take not in the pillar of Lot's wife, or metamorphosis of Ortelius, † some may be older than pyramids, in the petrified relics of the general inundation. When Alexander opened the tomb of Cyrus, the remaining bones

* Of Thomas, Marquis of Dorset, whose body being buried, 1530, was, 1608, upon the cutting open of the cerecloth, found perfect, and nothing corrupted, the flesh not hardened, but in color, proportion, and softness, like an ordinary corpse, newly to be interred. See Burton's Description of Leicestershire.

† In his Map of Russia.

discovered his proportion, whereof urnal fragments afford but a bad conjecture, and have this disadvantage of grave-interments, that they leave us ignorant of most personal discoveries. For since bones afford not only rectitude and stability, but figure unto the body, it is no impossible physiognomy to conjecture at fleshy appendencies, and after what shape the muscles and carnous parts might hang in their full consistencies. A full spread cariola * shows a well-shaped horse behind; handsome-formed skulls give some analogy of fleshly resemblance. A critical view of bones makes a good distinction of sexes. Even color is not beyond conjecture; since it is hard to be deceived in the distinction of negroes' skulls.† Dante's characters are to be found in skulls as well as faces. ‡ Hercules is not only known by his foot;

* That part next the haunch bones.

† For their extraordinary thickness.

‡ The poet Dante, in his view of Purgatory, found gluttons so meagre and extenuated, that he conceited them to have been in the siege of Jerusalem, and that it was easy to have discovered Homo or Omo in their faces; M being made by the two lines of their cheeks, arching over the eye-brows to the nose, and their sunk eyes making O O, which makes up Omo.

"Parean l'occhiaje anella senza gemme:
Chi nel viso degli uomini legge OMO,
Ben avria quivi conosciuto l' emme."

Purg. xxiii. 31.

other parts make out their comproportions and inferences upon whole or parts. And since the dimensions of the head measure the whole body, and the figure thereof gives conjecture of the principal faculties, physiognomy outlives ourselves, and ends not in our graves.

Severe contemplators observing these lasting relics, may think them good monuments of persons past, little advantage to future beings; and, considering that power which subdueth all things unto itself, that can resume the scattered atoms, or identify out of any thing, conceive it superfluous to expect a resurrection out of relics. But the soul subsisting, other matter, clothed with due accidents, may salve the individuality. Yet the saints, we observe, arose from graves and monuments about the holy city. Some think the ancient patriarchs so earnestly desired to lay their bones in Canaan, as hoping to make a part of that resurrection, and, though thirty miles from Mount Calvary, at least to lie in that region which should produce the first-fruits of the dead. And if, according to learned conjecture, the bodies of men shall rise where their greatest relics remain, many are not like to err in the topography of their resurrection, though their bones or bodies be after translated by angels into the field of Ezekiel's vision, or, as some will order it, into the Valley of Judgment, or Jehosaphat.

CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIANS have handsomely glossed the deformity of death, by careful consideration of the body, and civil rites, which take off brutal terminations; and, though they conceived all reparable by a resurrection, cast not off all care of interment. And since the ashes of sacrifices burnt upon the altar of God, were carefully carried out by the priests, and deposed in a clean field; since they acknowledged their bodies to be the lodging of Christ and temples of the Holy Ghost, they devolved not all upon the sufficiency of soul existence; and therefore with long services and full solemnities concluded their last exequies, wherein, to all distinctions, the Greek devotion seems most pathetically ceremonious.

Christian invention hath chiefly driven at rites which speak hopes of another life, and hints of a resurrection. And if the ancient Gentiles held not the immortality of their better part, and some subsistence after death, in several rites, customs, actions, and expressions, they contradicted their own opinions; wherein Democritus went high, even to the thought of

a resurrection, as scoffingly recorded by Pliny.* What can be more express than the expression of Phocyllides ? † or who could expect from Lucretius ‡ a sentence of Ecclesiastes? Before Plato could speak, the soul had wings in Homer, which fell not, but flew out of the body into the mansions of the dead; who also observed that handsome distinction of Demas and Soma, for the body conjoined to the soul, and body separated from it. Lucian spoke much truth in jest, when he said, that part of Hercules which proceeded from Alcmena perished, that from Jupiter remained immortal. Thus Socrates was content that his friends should bury his body, so they would not think they buried Socrates, and, regarding only his immortal part, was indifferent to be burnt or buried. From such considerations Diogenes might condemn sepulture, and, being satisfied that his soul could not perish, grow careless of corporal interment. The Stoics, who thought the souls of wise men had their habitation

* Similis reviviscendi promissa Democrito vanitas, qui non revixit ipse. Quæ, malum, ista dementia est, iterari vitam morte! Plin. lib. 7. c. 56.

† Καὶ τάχα δ' ἐκ γαίης ἐλπίζομεν ἐς φάος ἐλθεῖν
Λείψανα' ἀπαχομένων, κ. τ. λ.

‡ Cedit enim retro de terrâ quod fuit ante
In terram, &c.

about the moon, might make slight account of subterraneous deposition; whereas the Pythagoreans and transcorporating philosophers, who were to be often buried, held great care of their interment. And the Platonics rejected not a due care of the grave, though they put their ashes to unreasonable expectations, in their tedious term of return and long set revolution.

Men have lost their reason in nothing so much as their religion, wherein stones and clouts make martyrs; and since the religion of one seems madness unto another, to afford an account or rational of old rites, requires no rigid reader. That they kindled the pyre aversely, or turning their face from it, was a handsome symbol of unwilling ministration. That they washed their bones with wine and milk; that the mother wrapped them in linen, and dried them in her bosom, the first fostering part and place of their nourishment; that they opened their eyes towards heaven before they kindled the fire, as the place of their hopes or original, were no improper ceremonies. Their last valediction, thrice uttered by the attendants,* was also very solemn, and somewhat answered by Christians, who thought it too little, if they

* Vale, vale, vale; nos te ordine, quo natura permittet, sequemur.

threw not the earth thrice upon the interred body. That in strewing their tombs, the Romans affected the rose, the Greeks amaranthus and myrtle; that the funeral pyre consisted of sweet fuel, cypress, fir, larix, yew, and trees perpetually verdant, lay silent expressions of their surviving hopes. Wherein Christians, who deck their coffins with bays, have found a more elegant emblem; for that tree seeming dead, will restore itself from the root, and its dry and exsuccous leaves resume their verdure again; which, if we mistake not, we have also observed in furze. Whether the planting of yew in church-yards holds not its original from ancient funeral rites, or as an emblem of resurrection from its perpetual verdure, may also admit conjecture.

They made use of music to excite or quiet the affections of their friends, according to different harmonies. But the secret and symbolical hint was the harmonical nature of the soul, which, delivered from the body, went again to enjoy the primitive harmony of heaven, from whence it first descended; which, according to its progress traced by antiquity, came down by Cancer, and ascended by Capricornus.

They burnt not children before their teeth appeared, as apprehending their bodies too tender a morsel for fire, and that their gristly

bones would scarce leave separable relics after the pyral combustion. That they kindled not fire in their houses for some days after, was a strict memorial of the late afflicting fire. And mourning without hope, they had a happy fraud against excessive lamentation, by a common opinion that deep sorrows disturbed their ghosts.*

That they buried their dead on their backs, or in a supine position, seems agreeable unto profound sleep and common posture of dying, contrary to the most natural way of birth, nor unlike our pendulous posture in the doubtful state of the womb. Diogenes was singular, who preferred a prone situation in the grave; and some Christians † like neither, who decline the figure of rest, and make choice of an erect posture.

That they carried them out of the world with their feet forward, not inconsonant unto reason, as contrary unto the native posture of man, and his production first into it, and also agreeable unto their opinions, while they bid adieu unto the world, not to look again upon it; whereas Mahometans, who think to return to a delightful life again, are carried forth with their heads forward, and looking toward their houses.

* Tu manes ne læde meos. † Russians, &c.

They closed their eyes, as parts which first die, or first discover the sad effects of death. But their iterated clamations to excitate their dying or dead friends, or revoke them unto life again, was a vanity of affection, as not presumably ignorant of the critical tests of death, by apposition of feathers, glasses, and reflection of figures, which dead eyes represent not; which, however not strictly verifiable in fresh and warm cadavers, could hardly elude the test in corpses of four or five days.

That they sucked in the last breath of their expiring friends, was surely a practice of no medical institution, but a loose opinion that the soul passed out that way, and a fondness of affection from some Pythagorical foundation, that the spirit of one body passed into another, which they wished might be their own.

That they poured oil upon the pyre, was a tolerable practice, while the intention rested in facilitating the ascension. But to place good omens in the quick and speedy burning, to sacrifice unto the winds for a despatch in this office, was a low form of superstition.

The Archimime, or jester, attending the funeral train, and imitating the speeches, gesture, and manners of the deceased, was too light for such solemnities, contradicting their funeral orations and doleful rites of the grave.

That they buried a piece of money with them as a fee of the Elysian ferryman, was a practice full of folly. But the ancient custom of placing coins in considerable urns, and the present practice of burying medals in the noble foundations of Europe, are laudable ways of historical discoveries, in actions, persons, chronologies; and posterity will applaud them.

We examine not the old laws of sepulture, exempting certain persons from burial or burning. But hereby we apprehend that these were not the bones of persons planet-struck or burnt with fire from heaven; no relics of traitors to their country, self-killers, or sacrilegious malefactors, persons in old apprehension unworthy of the earth, condemned unto the Tartarus of hell and bottomless pit of Pluto, from whence there was no redemption.

Nor were only many customs questionable in order to their obsequies, but also sundry practices, fictions, and conceptions, discordant or obscure, of their state and future beings. Whether unto eight or ten bodies of men to add one of a woman, as being more inflammable, and unctuously constituted for the better pyral combustion, were any rational practice; or whether the complaint of Periander's wife be tolerable, that wanting her funeral burning, she suffered intolerable cold in hell, according to the

constitution of the infernal house of Pluto, wherein cold makes a great part of their tortures; it cannot pass without some question.

Why the female ghosts appear unto Ulysses before the heroes and masculine spirits; why the Psyche, or soul, of Tiresias is of the masculine gender,* who, being blind on earth, sees more than all the rest in hell; why the funeral suppers consisted of eggs, beans, smallage, and lettuce, since the dead are made to eat asphodels † about the Elysian meadows; why, since there is no sacrifice acceptable, nor any propitiation for the covenant of the grave, men set up the deity of Morta, and fruitlessly adored divinities without ears; it cannot escape some doubt.

The dead seem all alive in the human "hades" of Homer, yet cannot well speak, prophesy, or know the living, except they drink blood, wherein is the life of man. And therefore the souls of Penelope's paramours, conducted by Mercury, chirped like bats, and those which followed Hercules made a noise, but like a flock of birds.

The departed spirits know things past and to come, yet are ignorant of things present. Agamemnon foretells what should happen unto

* Ψυχὴ Θηβαίου Τειρεσίαο σκῆπτρον ἔχουσα. Homer.
† Lucian.

Ulysses, yet ignorantly inquires what is become of his own son. The ghosts are afraid of swords in Homer; yet Sibylla tells Æneas in Virgil, the thin habit of spirits was beyond the force of weapons. The spirits put off their malice with their bodies, and Cæsar and Pompey accord in Latin hell; yet Ajax, in Homer, endures not a conference with Ulysses; and Deiphobus appears all mangled in Virgil's ghosts; yet we meet with perfect shadows among the wounded ghosts of Homer.

Since Charon, in Lucian, applauds his condition among the dead, whether it be handsomely said of Achilles, that living contemner of death, that he had rather be a ploughman's servant than emperor of the dead; how Hercules's soul is in hell and yet in heaven, and Julius's soul in a star, yet seen by Æneas in hell; (except the ghosts were but images and shadows of the soul, received in higher mansions, according to the ancient division of body, soul, and image, or simulacrum of them both,) we leave our readers to judge. The particulars of future beings must needs be dark unto ancient theories, which Christian philosophy yet determines but in a cloud of opinions. A dialogue between two infants in the womb, concerning the state of this world, might handsomely illustrate our ignorance of the next, whereof

methinks we yet discourse in Plato's den, and are but embryon philosophers.

Pythagoras escapes, in the fabulous hell of Dante, among that swarm of philosophers, wherein, whilst we meet with Plato and Socrates, Cato is to be found in no lower place than Purgatory. Among all the set, Epicurus is most considerable, whom men make honest without an Elysium, who contemned life without encouragement of immortality, and making nothing after death, yet made nothing of the king of terrors.

Were the happiness of the next world as closely apprehended as the felicities of this, it were a martyrdom to live; and unto such as consider none hereafter, it must be more than death to die, which makes us amazed at those audacities that durst be nothing and return into their chaos again. Certainly such spirits as could contemn death, when they expected no better being after, would have scorned to live had they known any. And therefore we applaud not the judgment of Machiavel, that Christianity makes men cowards; or that with the confidence of but half dying, the despised virtues of patience and humility have abased the spirits of men, which Pagan principles exalted; but rather regulated the wildness of audacities, in the attempts, grounds, and eternal

sequels of death, wherein men of the boldest spirits are often prodigiously temerarious. Nor can we extenuate the valor of ancient martyrs, who contemned death in the uncomfortable scene of their lives, and in their decrepit martyrdoms did probably lose not many months of their days, or parted with life when it was scarce worth the living; for (beside that long time past holds no consideration unto a slender time to come) they had no small disadvantage from the constitution of old age, which naturally makes men fearful, and complexionally superannuated from the bold and courageous thoughts of youth and fervent years. But the contempt of death from corporal animosity promoteth not our felicity. They may sit in the orchestra and noblest seats of heaven who have held up shaking hands in the fire, and humanly contended for glory.

Meanwhile Epicurus lies deep in Dante's hell, wherein we meet with tombs enclosing souls which denied their immortalities. But whether the virtuous heathen, who lived better than he spake, or erring in the principles of himself, yet lived above philosophers of more specious maxims, lie so deep as he is placed; at least so low as not to rise against Christians, who, believing or knowing that truth, have lastingly denied it in their practice and conversation, — were a query too sad to insist on.

But all or most apprehensions rested in opinions of some future being, which, ignorantly or coldly believed, begat those perverted conceptions, ceremonies, sayings, which Christians pity or laugh at. Happy are they which live not in that disadvantage of time, when men could say little for futurity but from reason; whereby the noblest minds fell often upon doubtful deaths and melancholy dissolutions. With these hopes Socrates warmed his doubtful spirits against that cold potion; and Cato, before he durst give the fatal stroke, spent part of the night in reading the immortality of Plato, thereby confirming his wavering hand unto the animosity of that attempt.

It is the heaviest stone that melancholy can throw at a man, to tell him he is at the end of his nature; or that there is no farther state to come, unto which this seems progressional, and otherwise made in vain. Without this accomplishment, the natural expectation and desire of such a state were but a fallacy in nature. Unsatisfied considerators would quarrel at the justice of their constitutions, and rest content that Adam had fallen lower; whereby, by knowing no other original, and deeper ignorance of themselves, they might have enjoyed the happiness of inferior creatures, who in tranquillity possess their constitutions, as having not the

apprehension to deplore their own natures; and being framed below the circumference of these hopes, or cognition of better being, the wisdom of God hath necessitated their contentment. But the superior ingredient and obscured part of ourselves, whereto all present felicities afford no resting contentment, will be able at last to tell us we are more than our present selves, and evacuate such hopes in the fruition of their own accomplishments.

CHAPTER V.

Now, since these dead bones have already outlasted the living ones of Methuselah, and, in a yard under ground, and thin walls of clay, outworn all the strong and specious buildings above it, and quietly rested under the drums and tramplings of three conquests; what prince can promise such diuturnity unto his relics, or might not gladly say,

"Sic ego componi versus in ossa velim."

Time which antiquates antiquities, and hath an art to make dust of all things, hath yet spared these minor monuments. In vain we hope to be known by open and visible conservatories, when to be unknown was the means of their continuation, and obscurity their protection.

If they died by violent hands, and were thrust into their urns, these bones become considerable, and some old philosophers would honor them, whose souls they conceived most pure, which were thus snatched from their bodies,* and to retain a stronger propension unto them; whereas, they weariedly left a languishing

* Βίῃ λιπόντων σῶμα ψυχαὶ καθαράταται. Vi corpus relinquentium animæ purissimæ. Oracula Chaldaica cum scholiis Pselli et Phethonis.

corpse, and with faint desires of reunion. If they fell by long and aged decay, yet wrapped up in the bundle of time, they fall into indistinction, and make but one blot with infants. If we begin to die when we live, and long life be but a prolongation of death, our life is a sad composition; we live with death, and die not in a moment. How many pulses made up the life of Methuselah, were work for Archimedes. Common counters sum up the life of Moses's man.* Our days become considerable, like petty sums by minute accumulations, where numerous fractions make up but small round numbers, and our days of a span long make not one little finger.†

If the nearness of our last necessity brought a nearer conformity unto it, there were a happiness in hoary hairs, and no calamity in half senses. But the long habit of living indisposeth us for dying; when avarice makes us the sport of death; when even David grew politically cruel; and Solomon could hardly be said to be the wisest of men. But many are too early old, and before the date of age. Adversity stretcheth our days, misery makes Alcmena's nights, ‡ and

* In the psalm of Moses.

† According to the ancient arithmetic of the hand, wherein the little finger of the right hand, contracted, signified a hundred.

‡ One night as long as three.

time hath no wings unto it. But the most tedious being is that which can unwish itself, content to be nothing, or never to have been; which was beyond the malecontent of Job, who cursed not the day of his life, but his nativity, content to have so far been, as to have a title to future being, although he had lived here but in a hidden state of life, and as it were an abortion.

What song the Syrens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, though puzzling questions,* are not beyond all conjecture. What time the persons of these ossuaries entered the famous nations of the dead,† and slept with princes and counsellors, might admit a wide solution. But who were the proprietaries of these bones, or what bodies these ashes made up, were a question above antiquarianism; not to be resolved by man, nor easily perhaps by spirits, except we consult the provincial guardians or tutelary observators. Had they made as good provision for their names as they have done for their relics, they had not so grossly erred in the art of perpetuation. But to subsist in bones, and be but pyramidally extant, is a fallacy in dura-

* The puzzling questions of Tiberius unto grammarians. Marcel. Donatus in Suet.

† Κλινὰ ἴδια τιτρῶν. Hom. Job.

tion. Vain ashes, which in the oblivion of names, persons, times, and sexes, have found unto themselves a fruitless continuation, and only arise unto late posterity, as emblems of mortal vanities, antidotes against pride, vain-glory, and madding vices. Pagan vain-glories, which thought the world might last for ever, had encouragement for ambition; and finding no Atropos unto the immortality of their names, were never damped with the necessity of oblivion. Even old ambitions had the advantage of ours, in the attempts of their vain-glories, who, acting early, and before the probable meridian of time, have by this time found great accomplishment of their designs, whereby the ancient heroes have already outlasted their monuments and mechanical preservations. But in this latter scene of time we cannot expect such mummies unto our memories, when ambition may fear the prophecy of Elias,* and Charles the Fifth can never expect to live within two Methuselahs of Hector.†

And therefore restless inquietude for the diuturnity of our memories unto present considerations, seems a vanity almost out of date, and superannuated piece of folly. We cannot hope

* That the world may last but six thousand years.

† Hector's fame lasting above two lives of Methuselah, before that famous prince, Charles, was extant.

to live so long in our names as some have done in their persons. One face of Janus holds no proportion unto the other. 'T is too late to be ambitious. The great mutations of the world are acted, or time may be too short for our designs. To extend our memories by monuments, whose death we daily pray for, and whose duration we cannot hope, without injury to our expectations, in the advent of the last day, were a contradiction to our beliefs. We, whose generations are ordained in this setting part of time, are providentially taken off from such imaginations; and being necessitated to eye the remaining particle of futurity, are naturally constituted unto thoughts of the next world, and cannot excusably decline the consideration of that duration, which maketh pyramids pillars of snow, and all that 's past a moment.

Circles and right lines limit and close all bodies, and the mortal right-lined circle * must conclude and shut up all. There is no antidote against the opium of time, which temporally considereth all things. Our fathers find their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our survi-

* ⊖, the character of death.

vors. Grave-stones tell truth scarce forty years.* Generations pass while some trees stand, and old families last not three oaks. To be read by bare inscriptions, like many in Gruter; † to hope for eternity by enigmatical epithets, or first letters of our names; to be studied by antiquaries, who we were, and have new names given us, like many of the mummies, ‡ are cold consolations unto the students of perpetuity, even by everlasting languages.

To be content that times to come should only know there was such a man, not caring whether they knew more of him, was a frigid ambition in Cardan, § disparaging his horoscopal inclination and judgment of himself. Who cares to subsist like Hippocrates's patients, or Achilles's horses in Homer, under naked nominations, without deserts and noble acts, which are the balsam of our memories, the "entelechia" and soul of our subsistences? Yet to be nameless in worthy deeds exceeds an infamous his-

* Old ones being taken up, and other bodies laid under them.

† Gruteri Inscriptiones Antiquæ.

‡ Which men show in several countries, giving them what names they please, and unto some the names of the old Egyptian kings out of Herodotus.

§ Cuperem notum esse quod sim, non opto ut sciatur qualis sim. Card. in Vitâ propriâ.

tory. The Canaanitish woman lives more happily without a name, than Herodias with one. And who had not rather have been the good thief than Pilate?

But the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity. Who can but pity the founder of the pyramids? Erostratus lives that burnt the Temple of Diana; he is almost lost that built it. Time hath spared the epitaph of Adrian's horse, confounded that of himself. In vain we compute our felicities by the advantage of our good names, since bad have equal durations; and Thersites is like to live as long as Agamemnon. Who knows whether the best of men be known, or whether there be not more remarkable persons forgot than any that stand remembered in the known account of time? Without the favor of the everlasting register, the first man had been as unknown as the last, and Methuselah's long life had been his only chronicle.

Oblivion is not to be hired. The greater part must be content to be as though they had not been, to be found in the register of God, not in the record of man. Twenty-seven names make up the first story,* and the recorded

* Before the flood.

names ever since contain not one living century. The number of the dead long exceedeth all that shall live. The night of time far surpasseth the day; and who knows when was the equinox? Every hour adds unto that current arithmetic, which scarce stands one moment. And since death must be the Lucina of life, and even Pagans could doubt whether thus to live were to die; since our longest sun sets at right declensions, and makes but winter arches, and therefore it cannot be long before we lie down in darkness, and have our light in ashes; * since the brother of death daily haunts us with dying mementos, and time, that grows old itself, bids us hope no long duration, diuturnity is a dream and folly of expectation.

Darkness and light divide the course of time, and oblivion shares with memory a great part even of our living beings. We slightly remember our felicities, and the smartest strokes of affliction leave but short smart upon us. Sense endureth no extremities, and sorrows destroy us or themselves. To weep into stones are fables. Afflictions induce callosities; miseries are slippery, or fall like snow upon us, which, notwithstanding, is no unhappy stupidity. To

* According to the custom of the Jews, who placed a lighted wax candle in a pot of ashes by the corpse.

be ignorant of evils to come, and forgetful of evils past, is a merciful provision in nature, whereby we digest the mixture of our few and evil days, and our delivered senses not relapsing into cutting remembrances, our sorrows are not kept raw by the edge of repetitions. A great part of antiquity contented their hopes of subsistency with a transmigration of their souls; a good way to continue their memories, while, having the advantage of plural successions, they could not but act something remarkable in such variety of beings, and enjoying the fame of their passed selves, make accumulation of glory unto their last durations. Others, rather than be lost in the uncomfortable night of nothing, were content to recede into the common being, and make one particle of the public soul of all things, which was no more than to return into their unknown and divine original again. Egyptian ingenuity was more unsatisfied, contriving their bodies in sweet consistencies to attend the return of their souls. But all was vanity, feeding the wind and folly.* The Egyptian mummies, which Cambyses or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth. Mummy is become merchandise, Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams.

* Omnia vanitas et pastio venti, *νομὴ ἀνέμου καὶ βόσκησις*, ut olim Aquila et Symmachus.

In vain do individuals hope for immortality, or any patent from oblivion, in preservations below the moon. Men have been deceived even in their flatteries above the sun, and studied conceits to perpetuate their names in heaven. The various cosmography of that part hath already varied the names of contrived constellations. Nimrod is lost in Orion, and Osiris in the Dog-star. While we look for incorruption in the heavens, we find they are but like the earth, durable in their main bodies, alterable in their parts; whereof, beside comets and new stars, perspectives begin to tell tales, and the spots that wander about the sun, with Phaëthon's favor, would make clear conviction.

There is nothing strictly immortal but immortality. Whatever hath no beginning, may be confident of no end; which is the peculiar of that necessary essence that cannot destroy itself, and the highest strain of omnipotency to be so powerfully constituted, as not to suffer even from the power of itself. All others have a dependent being, and within the reach of destruction. But the sufficiency of Christian immortality frustrates all earthly glory, and the quality of either state after death, makes a folly of posthumous memory. God, who can only destroy our souls, and hath assured our resurrection, either of our bodies or names hath di-

rectly promised no duration. Wherein there is so much of chance, that the boldest expectants have found unhappy frustration; and to hold long subsistence seems but a scape in oblivion. But man is a noble animal, splendid in ashes, and pompous in the grave, solemnizing nativities and deaths with equal lustre, nor omitting ceremonies of bravery in the infamy of his nature.

Life is a pure flame, and we live by an invisible sun within us. A small fire sufficeth for life; great flames seemed too little after death, while men vainly affected precious pyres, and to burn like Sardanapalus. But the wisdom of funeral laws found the folly of prodigal blazes, and reduced undoing fires unto the rule of sober obsequies, wherein few could be so mean as not to provide wood, pitch, a mourner, and an urn.*

Five languages † secured not the epitaph of Gordianus. The man of God lives longer without a tomb than any by one, invisibly interred

* According to the epitaph of Rufus and Beronica in Gruterus,

"Nec ex
Eorum bonis plus inventum est, quam
Quod sufficeret ad emendam pyram
Et picem quibus corpora cremarentur,
Et præfica conducta et olla empta."

† Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Egyptian, and Arabic, defaced by Licinius the Emperor.

by angels, and adjudged to obscurity, though not without some marks directing human discovery. Enoch and Elias, without either tomb or burial, in an anomalous state of being, are the great examples of perpetuity, in their long and living memory, in strict account being still on this side death, and having a late part yet to act upon this stage of earth. If in the decretory term of the world, we shall not all die but be changed, according to received translation, the last day will make but few graves; at least, quick resurrections will anticipate lasting sepultures. Some graves will be opened before they be quite closed, and Lazarus be no wonder; when many that feared to die shall groan that they can die but once. The dismal state is the second and living death, when life puts despair on the damned, when men shall wish the coverings of mountains, not of monuments, and annihilation shall be courted.

While some have studied monuments, others have studiously declined them; and some have been so vainly boisterous, that they durst not acknowledge their graves; wherein Alaricus seems more subtle, who had a river turned to hide his bones at the bottom. Even Sylla, who thought himself safe in his urn, could not prevent revenging tongues, and stones thrown at his monument. Happy are they whom privacy

makes innocent, who deal so with men in this world, that they are not afraid to meet them in the next; who, when they die, make no commotion among the dead, and are not touched with that poetical taunt of Isaiah.*

Pyramids, arches, obelisks, were but the irregularities of vain-glory and wild enormities of ancient magnanimity. But the most magnanimous resolution rests in the Christian religion, which trampleth upon pride, and sits on the neck of ambition, humbly pursuing that infallible perpetuity, unto which all others must diminish their diameters, and be poorly seen in angles of contingency.†

Pious spirits, who passed their days in raptures of futurity, made little more of this world than the world that was before it, while they lay obscure in the chaos of preördination and night of their forebeings. And if any have been so happy as truly to understand Christian annihilation, ecstasis, exolution, liquefaction, transformation, the kiss of the spouse, gustation of God, and ingression into the divine shadow, they have already had a handsome anticipation of heaven; the glory of the world is surely over, and the earth in ashes unto them.

* Isaiah xiv, 9, et seq.

† Angulus contingentiæ, the least of angles.

To subsist in lasting monuments, to live in their productions, to exist in their names and predicament of chimeras, was large satisfaction unto old expectations, and made one part of their Elysium. But all this is nothing in the metaphysics of true belief. To live indeed, is to be again ourselves, which being not only a hope but an evidence in noble believers, 't is all one to lie in St. Innocent's churchyard,* as in the sands of Egypt,† ready to be any thing, in the ecstasy of being ever, and as content with six feet as the "moles" of Adrianus. ‡

——————— "Tabesne cadavera solvat
"An rogus, haud refert." Lucan.

* In Paris, where bodies soon consume.

† Beneath the pyramids.

‡ A stately mausoleum, or sepulchral pile, built by Adrianus in Rome, where now standeth the castle of St. Angelo.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

A

LETTER TO A FRIEND

ON THE

DEATH OF HIS INTIMATE FRIEND.

Give me leave to wonder that news of this nature should have such heavy wings, that you should hear so little concerning your dearest friend, and that I must make that unwilling repetition to tell you, "ad portam rigidos calces extendit," that he is dead and buried, and by this time no puny among the mighty nations of the dead; for though he left this world not very many days past, yet every hour, you know, largely addeth unto that dark society; and, considering the incessant mortality of mankind, you cannot conceive there dieth in the whole earth so few as a thousand an hour.

Although at this distance you had no early account or particular of his death, yet your affection may cease to wonder that you had not

some secret sense or intimation thereof by dreams, thoughtful whisperings, mercurisms, airy nuncios, or sympathetical insinuations, which many seem to have had at the death of their dearest friends; for since we find in that famous story that spirits themselves were fain to tell their fellows at a distance that the great Antonio was dead, we have a sufficient excuse for our ignorance in such particulars, and must rest content with the common road and Appian way of knowledge, by information. Though the uncertainty of the end of this world hath confounded all human predictions, yet they who shall live to see the sun and moon darkened and the stars to fall from heaven, will hardly be deceived in the advent of the last day. And therefore strange it is, that the common fallacy of consumptive persons, who feel not themselves dying, and therefore still hope to live, should also reach their friends in perfect health and judgment; that you should be so little acquainted with Plautus's sick complexion, or that almost a Hippocratical face should not alarm you to higher fears, or rather despair of his continuation in such an emaciated state; wherein medical predictions fail not, as sometimes in acute diseases, and wherein 't is as dangerous to be sentenced by a physician as a judge.

Upon my first visit I was bold to tell them who had not let fall all hopes of his recovery, that, in my sad opinion, he was not like to behold a grasshopper, much less to pluck another fig; and in no long time after seemed to discover that odd mortal symptom in him not mentioned by Hippocrates, that is, to lose his own face, and look like some of his near relations; for he maintained not his proper countenance, but looked like his uncle, the lines of whose face lay deep and invisible in his healthful visage before. For, as from our beginning we run through variety of looks before we come to consistent and settled faces, so before our end, by sick and languishing alterations, we put on new visages; and in our retreat to earth, may fall upon such looks, which, from community of seminal originals, were before latent in us.

He was fruitlessly put in hope of advantage by change of air, and imbibing the pure aërial nitre of these parts; and therefore, being so far spent, he quickly found Sardinia in Tivoli,* and the most healthful air of little effect, where death had set her broad arrow; † for he lived not unto the middle of May, and confirmed the

* Cum mors venerit, in medio Tibure Sardinia est.

† In the king's forests they set the figure of a broad arrow upon trees that are to be cut down.

observation of Hippocrates of that mortal time of the year, when the leaves of the fig-tree resemble a daw's claw. He is happily seated who lives in places whose air, earth, and water promote not the infirmities of his weaker parts, or is early removed into regions that correct them. He that is tabidly inclined were unwise to pass his days in Portugal; cholical persons will find little comfort in Austria or Vienna; he that is weak-legged must not be in love with Rome, nor an infirm head with Venice or Paris. Death hath not only particular stars in heaven, but malevolent places on earth, which single out our infirmities, and strike at our weaker parts; in which concern, passager and 'migrant birds have the great advantages, who are naturally constituted for distant habitations, whom no seas nor places limit, but in their appointed seasons will visit us from Greenland and Mount Atlas, and, as some think, even from the Antipodes.

Though we could not have his life, yet we missed not our desires in his soft departure, which was scarce an expiration; and his end not unlike his beginning, when the salient point scarce affords a sensible motion, and his departure so like unto sleep, that he scarce needed the civil ceremony of closing his eyes; contrary unto the common way wherein death

draws up, sleep lets fall their eye-lids. With what strife and pains we came into the world we know not; but 't is commonly no easy matter to get out of it. Yet if it could be made out that such who have easy nativities have commonly hard deaths, and contrarily, his departure was so easy, that we might justly suspect his birth was of another nature, and that some Juno sat cross-legged at his nativity.

Besides his soft death, the incurable state of his disease might somewhat extenuate your sorrow, who know that monsters but seldom happen, miracles more rarely in physic. Angelus Victorius gives a serious account of a consumptive, hectical, phthisical woman, who was suddenly cured by the intercession of Ignatius. We read not of any in Scripture who in this case applied unto our Saviour, though some may be contained in that large expression, that he "went about Galilee, healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of diseases." Amulets, spells, sigils, and incantations, practised in other diseases, are seldom pretended in this; and we find no sigil in the Archidoxis of Paracelsus to cure an extreme consumption or marasmus, which, if other diseases fail, will put a period unto long livers, and at last make dust of all. And therefore the Stoics could not but think that the fiery principle would wear out

all the rest, and at last make an end of the world; which notwithstanding, without such a lingering period, the Creator may effect at his pleasure; and to make an end of all things on earth and our planetical system of the world, he need but put out the sun.

I was not so curious to entitle the stars unto any concern of his death, yet could not but take notice that he died when the moon was in motion from the meridian, at which time an old Italian long ago would persuade me that the greatest part of men died. But herein, I confess, I could never satisfy my curiosity, although from the time of tides in places upon or near the sea, there may be considerable deductions; and Pliny hath an odd and remarkable passage concerning the death of men and animals upon the recess or ebb of the sea.* However, certain it is he died in the dead and deep part of the night, when Nox might be most apprehensibly said to be the daughter of Chaos, the mother of sleep and death, according to old genealogy; and so went out of this world about that hour when our blessed Saviour entered it, and about what time many conceive he will return again unto it. Cardan

* Aristoteles nullum animal nisi æstu recedente expirare affirmat: observatum id multum in Gallico Oceano, et duntaxat in homine compertum. Lib. ii. cap. 101.

hath a peculiar and no hard observation from a man's hand to know whether he was born in the day or night, which, I confess, holdeth in my own, and Scaliger * to that purpose hath another from the tip of the ear. Most men are begotten in the night, animals in the day; but whether more persons have been born in the night or the day, were a curiosity undecidable; though more have perished by violent deaths in the day, yet in natural dissolutions both times may hold an indifferency, at least but contingent inequality. The whole course of time runs out in the nativity and death of things; which, whether they happen by succession or coincidence, are best computed by the natural, not artificial day.

That Charles the Fifth was crowned upon the day of his nativity, it being in his own power so to order it, makes no singular animadversion; but that he should also take king Francis prisoner upon that day, was an unexpected coincidence, which made the same remarkable. Antipater, who had an anniversary feast every year upon his birth-day, needed no astrological revolution to know what day he

* Auris pars pendula lobus dicitur; non omnibus ea pars est auribus; non enim iis qui noctu nati sunt, sed qui interdiu, maximâ ex parte. Com. in Aristot. de Animal. lib. i.

should die on. When the fixed stars have made a revolution unto the points from whence they first set out, some of the ancients thought the world would have an end; which was a kind of dying upon the day of its nativity. Now, the disease prevailing and swiftly advancing about the time of his nativity, some were of opinion that he would leave the world on the day that he entered it; but this being a lingering disease, and creeping softly on, nothing critical was found or expected, and he died not before fifteen days after. Nothing is more common with infants than to die on the day of their nativity; to behold the worldly hours, and but the fractions thereof; and even to perish before their nativity in the hidden world of the womb, and before their good angel is conceived to undertake for them. But in persons who outlive many years, and when there are no less than three hundred sixty-five days to determine their lives in every year; that the first day should make the last, that the tail of the snake should return into its mouth* precisely at that time, and they should wind up upon the day of their nativity, is indeed a remarkable coincidence, which though astrology hath taken witty pains to salve, yet

* According to the Egyptian hieroglyphic.

hath it been very wary in making predictions of it.

In this consumptive condition and remarkable extenuation, he came to be almost half himself, and left a great part behind him which he carried not to the grave. And though that story of Duke John Ernestus Mansfield be not so easily swallowed, that at his death his heart was found not to be so big as a nut; yet if the bones of a good skeleton weigh little more than twenty pounds, his inwards and flesh remaining could make no bouffage, but a light bit for the grave. I never more lively beheld the starved characters of Dante in any living face; an Aruspex might have read a lecture upon him without exenteration, his flesh being so consumed, that he might, in a manner, have discerned his bowels without opening of him; so that to be carried "sextâ cervice," to the grave, was but a civil unnecessity; and the complements of the coffin might outweigh the subject of it.

Omnibonus Ferrarius,* in mortal dysenteries of children, looks for a spot behind the ear. In consumptive diseases, some eye the complexion of moles; Cardan eagerly views the nails; some the lines of the hand, the thenar, or muscle of

* De Morbis Puerorum.

the thumb; some are so curious as to observe the depth of the throat-pit, how the proportion varieth of the small of the legs unto the calf, or the compass of the neck unto the circumference of the head. But all these, with many more, were so drowned in a mortal visage and last face of Hippocrates, that a weak physiognomist might say at first eye, this was a face of earth, and that Morta* had set her hard seal upon his temples, easily perceiving what "caricatura" draughts death makes upon pined faces, and unto what an unknown degree a man may live backward.

Though the beard be only made a distinction of sex, and sign of masculine heat by Ulmus, yet the precocity and early growth thereof in him was not to be liked in reference unto long life. Lewis, that virtuous but unfortunate king of Hungary, who lost his life at the battle of Mohacz, was said to be born without a skin, to have bearded at fifteen, and to have shown some gray hairs about twenty; from whence the diviners conjectured, that he would be spoiled of his kingdom and have but a short life. But hairs make fallible predictions, and many temples early gray have outlived the Psalmist's period. Hairs, which have most amused me, have

* Morta, the deity of death or fate.

not been in the face or head, but on the back; and not in men, but children, as I long ago observed in that endemial distemper of little children in Languedoc, called the Morgellons, wherein they critically break out with harsh hairs on their backs, which takes off the unquiet symptoms of the disease, and delivers them from coughs and convulsions.

The Egyptian mummies that I have seen, have had their mouths open, and somewhat gaping, which affordeth a good opportunity to view and observe their teeth, wherein 't is not easy to find any wanting or decayed; and therefore in Egypt, where one man practised but one operation, or the diseases but of single parts, it must needs be a barren profession to confine unto that of drawing of teeth, and little better than to have been tooth-drawer unto King Pyrrhus,* who had but two in his head. How the Bannyans of India maintain the integrity of those parts, I find not particularly observed, who, notwithstanding, have an advantage of their preservation by abstaining from all flesh, and employing their teeth in such food unto which they may seem at first framed, from their figure and conformation. But sharp and corroding rheums had so early

* His upper and lower jaw being solid, and without distinct rows of teeth.

mouldered those rocks and hardest parts of his fabric, that a man might well conceive that his years were never like to double, or twice tell over his teeth.* Corruption had dealt more severely with them than sepulchral fires and smart flames with those of burnt bodies of old; for in the burnt fragments of urns which I have inquired into, although I seem to find few incisors or shearers, yet the dog-teeth and grinders do notably resist those fires.

In the years of his childhood he had languished under the disease of his country, the rickets; after which, notwithstanding, many have been become strong and active men; but whether any have attained unto very great years, the disease is scarce so old as to afford good observation. Whether the children of the English plantations be subject unto the same infirmity, may be worth the observing. Whether lameness and halting do still increase among the inhabitants of Rovigno in Istria, I know not; yet scarce twenty years ago Monsieur du Loyr observed, that a third part of that people halted. But too certain it is, that the rickets increaseth among us; the small-pox grows more pernicious than the great; the king's purse knows that the king's evil grows

* Never live to threescore years.

more common. Quartan agues are become no strangers in Ireland; more common and mortal in England; and though the ancients gave that disease very good words,* yet now that bell makes no strange sound which rings out for the effects thereof.

Some think there were few consumptions in the old world, when men lived much upon milk; and that the ancient inhabitants of this island were less troubled with coughs when they went naked and slept in caves and woods, than men now in chambers and feather-beds. Plato will tell us, that there was no such disease as a catarrh in Homer's time, and that it was but new in Greece in his age. Polydore Virgil delivereth that pleurisies were rare in England, who lived but in the days of Henry the Eighth. Some will allow no diseases to be new; others think that many old ones are ceased, and that such which are esteemed new will have but their time. However, the mercy of God hath scattered the great heap of diseases, and not loaded any one country with all. Some may be new in one country which have been old in another. New discoveries of the earth discover new diseases; for, besides the common swarm, there are endemial and

* Ἀσφαλέστατος καὶ ἥδιστος, securissima et facillima. Hippocr. Pro febre quartanâ raro sonat campana.

local infirmities proper unto certain regions, which, in the whole earth, make no small number; and if Asia, Africa, and America should bring in their list, Pandora's box would swell, and there must be a strange pathology.

Most men expected to find a consumed kell, empty and bladder-like guts, livid and marbled lungs, and a withered pericardium, in this exuccous corps; but some seemed too much to wonder that two lobes of his lungs adhered unto his side; for the like I had often found in bodies of no suspected consumptions or difficulty of respiration. And the same more often happeneth in men than in other animals; and some think in women than in men; but the most remarkable I have met with was in a man after a cough of almost fifty years, in whom all the lobes adhered unto the pleura, and each lobe unto another; who, having also been much troubled with the gout, brake the rule of Cardan,* and died of the stone in the bladder. Aristotle makes a query, why some animals cough, as man, some not, as oxen. If coughing be taken as it consisteth of a natural and voluntary motion, including expectoration and spitting out, it may be as proper unto man

* Cardan, in his Encomium Podagræ, reckoneth this among the "dona podagræ," that they are thereby delivered from the phthisis and stone in the bladder.

as bleeding at the nose. Otherwise we find that Vegetius and rural writers have not left so many medicines in vain against the coughs of cattle; and men who perish by coughs die the death of sheep, cats, and lions; and though birds have no midriff, yet we meet with divers remedies in Arrianus against the coughs of hawks. And though it might be thought that all animals who have lungs do cough, yet in cetaceous fishes, who have large and strong lungs, the same is not observed; nor yet in oviparous quadrupeds; and in the greatest thereof, the crocodile, although we read much of their tears, we find nothing of that motion.

From the thoughts of sleep, when the soul was conceived nearest unto the divinity, the ancients erected an art of divination, wherein, while they too widely expatiated in loose and inconsequent conjectures, Hippocrates wisely considered dreams as they presaged alterations in the body, and so afforded hints towards the preservation of health and prevention of diseases, and therein was so serious as to advise alteration of diet, exercise, sweating, bathing, and vomiting; and also so religious as to order prayers and supplications unto respective deities, in good dreams, unto Sol, Jupiter Cœlestis, Jupiter Opulentus, Minerva, Mercurius, and Apollo; in bad, unto Tellus and the Heroes.

And therefore I could not but take notice how his female friends were irrationally curious so strictly to examine his dreams, and in this low state to hope for the phantasms of health. He was now past the healthful dreams of the sun, moon, and stars, in their clarity and proper courses. It was too late to dream of flying, of limpid fountains, smooth waters, white vestments, and fruitful green trees, which are the visions of healthful sleeps, and at good distance from the grave.

And they were also too deeply dejected that he should dream of his dead friends, inconsequently divining, that he would not be long from them; for strange it was not that he should sometimes dream of the dead, whose thoughts run always upon death. Beside, to dream of the dead, so they appear not in dark habits, and take nothing away from us, in Hippocrates' sense was of good signification; for we live by the dead, and every thing is or must be so before it becomes our nourishment. And Cardan, who dreamed that he discoursed with his dead father in the moon, made thereof no mortal interpretation; and even to dream that we are dead, was no condemnable phantasm in old Oneirocriticism, as having a signification of liberty, vacuity from cares, exemption and freedom from troubles unknown unto the dead.

Some dreams, I confess, may admit of easy and feminine exposition. He who dreamed that he could not see his right shoulder, might easily fear to lose the sight of his right eye; he that before a journey dreamed that his feet were cut off, had a plain warning not to undertake his intended journey. But why to dream of lettuce should presage some ensuing disease, why to eat figs should signify foolish talk, why to eat eggs great trouble, and to dream of blindness should be so highly commended according to the Oneirocritical verses of Astrampsychus and Nicephorus, I shall leave unto your divination.

He was willing to quit the world alone and altogether, leaving no earnest behind him for corruption or after-grave, having small content in that common satisfaction, to survive or live in another, but amply satisfied that his disease should die with himself, nor revive in a posterity to puzzle physic, and make sad mementos of their parent hereditary. Leprosy awakes not sometimes before forty; the gout and stone often later; but consumptive and tabid roots spread more early, and at the fairest make seventeen years of our life doubtful before that age.*

* Tabes maxime contingunt ab anno decimo octavo ad trigesimum quintum. Hippocr.

They that enter the world with original diseases as well as sin, have not only common mortality but sick traductions to destroy them, make commonly short courses, and live not at length but in figures; so that a sound Cæsarean nativity may outlast a natural birth, and a knife may sometimes make way for a more lasting fruit than a midwife; which makes so few infants now able to endure the old test of the river,* and many to have feeble children, who could scarce have been married at Sparta and those provident states who studied strong and healthful generations; which happen but contingently in mere pecuniary matches, or marriages made by the candle, wherein, notwithstanding, there is little redress to be hoped from an astrologer or a lawyer, and a good discerning physician were like to prove the most successful counsellor. Julius Scaliger, who in a sleepless fit of the gout could make two hundred verses in a night, would have but five plain words upon his tomb. † And this serious person, though no minor wit, left the poetry of his epitaph unto others; either unwilling to commend himself, or to be judged by a distich,

* ———— Natos ad flumina primum
Deferimus, sævoque gelu duramus et undis.

† Julii Cæsaris Scaligeri, quod fuit.

and perhaps considering how unhappy great poets have been in versifying their own epitaphs; wherein Petrarca, Dante, and Ariosto have so unhappily failed, that if their tombs should outlast their works, posterity would find so little of Apollo on them, as to mistake them for Ciceronian poets.

In this deliberate and creeping progress unto the grave, he was somewhat too young and of too noble a mind to fall upon that stupid symptom, observable in divers persons near their journey's end, and which may be reckoned among the mortal symptoms of their last disease; that is, to become more narrow-minded, miserable, and tenacious, unready to part with any thing, when they are ready to part with all, and afraid to want when they have no time to spend. Meanwhile, physicians, who know that many are mad but in a single depraved imagination and one prevalent decipiency, and that beside and out of such single deliriums a man may meet with sober actions and good sense in Bedlam, cannot but smile to see the heirs and concerned relations gratulating themselves in the sober departure of their friends; and though they behold such mad covetous passages, content to think they die in good understanding and in their sober senses.

Avarice, which is not only infidelity but idolatry, either from covetous progeny or questuary education, had no root in his breast, who made good works the expression of his faith, and was big with desires unto public and lasting charities; and surely, where good wishes and charitable intentions exceed abilities, theoretical beneficiency may be more than a dream. They build not castles in the air who would build churches on earth; and though they leave no such structures here, may lay good foundations in heaven. In brief, his life and death were such, that I could not blame them who wished the like, and almost to have been himself; almost, I say, for though we may wish the prosperous appurtenances of others, or to be another in his happy accidents, yet so intrinsical is every man unto himself, that some doubt may be made, whether any would exchange his being, or substantially become another man.

He had wisely seen the world at home and abroad, and thereby observed under what variety men are deluded into the pursuit of that which is not here to be found. And although he had no opinion of reputed felicities below, and apprehended men widely out in the estimate of such happiness, yet his sober contempt of the world wrought no Democritism or Cyni-

cism, no laughing or snarling at it, as well understanding there are not felicities in this world to satisfy a serious mind. And therefore to soften the stream of our lives, we are fain to take in the reputed contentations of this world, to unite with the crowd in their beatitudes, and to make ourselves happy by consortion, opinion, or coëxistimation; for strictly to separate from received and customary felicities and to confine unto the rigor of realities, were to contract the consolation of our beings into too uncomfortable circumscriptions.

Not to fear death nor desire it,* was short of his resolution: to be dissolved, and be with Christ, was his dying ditty. He conceived his thread long, in no long course of years, and when he had scarce outlived the second life of Lazarus;† esteeming it enough to approach the years of his Saviour, who so ordered his own human state, as not to be old upon earth.

But to be content with death may be better than to desire it. A miserable life may make us wish for death, but a virtuous one to rest in it; which is the advantage of those resolved Christians, who, looking on death not only as

* Summum nec metuas diem nec optes.

† Who, upon some accounts and traditions, is said to have lived thirty years after he was raised by our Saviour. Baronius.

the sting, but the period and end of sin, the horizon and isthmus between this life and a better, and the death of this world but as the nativity of another, do contentedly submit unto the common necessity, and envy not Enoch nor Elias.

Not to be content with life, is the unsatisfactory state of those which destroy themselves,* who, being afraid to live, run blindly upon their own death, which no man fears by experience. And the Stoics had a notable doctrine to take away the fear thereof, that is, in such extremities to desire that which is not to be avoided, and wish what might be feared; and so made evils voluntary and to suit with their own desires, which took off the terror of them.

But the ancient martyrs were not encouraged by such fallacies; who, though they feared not death, were afraid to be their own executioners, and therefore thought it more wisdom to crucify their lusts than their bodies, to circumcise than stab their hearts, and to mortify than kill themselves.

His willingness to leave this world about that age, when most men think they may best enjoy

* In the speech of Vulteius in Lucan, animating his soldiers in a great struggle to kill one another.

——— "Decernite lethum,
Et metus omnis abest; cupias, quodcunque necesse est."

"All fear is over; do but resolve to die, and make your desires meet necessity."

it, though paradoxical unto worldly ears, was not strange unto mine, who have so often observed, that many, though old, oft stick fast unto the world, and seem to be drawn, like Cacus's oxen, backward, with great struggling and reluctance into the grave. The long habit of living makes mere men more hardly to part with life, and all to be nothing but what is to come. To live at the rate of the old world, when some could scarce remember themselves young, may afford no better-digested death than a more moderate period. Many would have thought it a happiness to have had their lot of life in some notable conjuncture of ages past; but the uncertainty of future times hath tempted few to make a part in ages to come. And surely he that hath taken the true altitude of things, and rightly calculated the degenerate state of this age, is not likely to envy those that shall live in the next, much less three or four hundred years hence, when no man can comfortably imagine what face this world will carry. And therefore, since every age makes a step unto the end of all things, and the Scripture affords so hard a character of the last times, quiet minds will be content with their generations, and rather bless ages past than be ambitious of those to come.

Though age had set no seal upon his face, yet a dim eye might clearly discover fifty in his actions; and therefore, since wisdom is the gray hair, and an unspotted life old age, although his years came short, he might have been said to have held up with longer livers, and to have been Solomon's old man.* And surely if we deduct all those days of our life which we might wish unlived, and which abate the comfort of those we now live; if we reckon up only those days which God hath accepted of our lives, a life of good years will hardly be a span long. The son, in this sense, may outlive the father, and none be climacterically old. He that early arriveth unto the parts and prudence of age, is happily old without the uncomfortable attendants of it; and 't is superfluous to live unto gray hairs, when in a precocious temper we anticipate the virtues of them. In brief, he cannot be accounted young who outliveth the old man. He that hath early arrived unto the measure of a perfect stature in Christ, hath already fulfilled the prime and longest intention of his being; and one day lived after the perfect rule of piety, is to be preferred before sinning immortality.

Although he attained not unto the years of his predecessors, yet he wanted not those pre-

* Wisdom, chap. iv.

serving virtues which confirm the thread of weaker constitutions. Cautelous chastity and crafty sobriety were far from him; those jewels were paragon, without flaw, hair, ice, or cloud in him; which affords me a hint to proceed in these good wishes and few mementos unto you.*

Tread softly and circumspectly in this funambulous track and narrow path of goodness; pursue virtue virtuously; be sober and temperate, not to preserve your body in a sufficiency to wanton ends, not to spare your purse, not to be free from the infamy of common transgressors that way, and thereby to balance or palliate obscurer and closer vices, nor simply to enjoy health, by all which you may leaven good actions and render virtues disputable; but, in one word, that you may truly serve God, which, every sickness will tell you, you cannot well do without health. The sick man's sacrifice is but a lame oblation. Pious treasures laid up in healthful days excuse the defect of sick non-performance; without which we must needs look back with anxiety upon the lost opportunities of health, and may have cause rather to envy than pity the ends of penitent male-

* The remainder of this Letter was afterwards enlarged by the author, and was published in a posthumous work under the title of "Christian Morals."

factors, who go with clear parts unto the last act of their lives, and in the integrity of their faculties return their spirit unto God that gave it.

Consider whereabout thou art in Cebes's table, or that old philosophical pinax of the life of man; whether thou art still in the road of uncertainties; whether thou hast yet entered the narrow gate, got up the hill and asperous way which leadeth unto the house of sanity, or taken that purifying potion from the hand of sincere erudition, which may send thee clear and pure away unto a virtuous and happy life.

In this virtuous voyage, let not disappointment cause despondency, nor difficulty despair. Think not that you are sailing from Lima * to Manilla, wherein thou mayest tie up the rudder and sleep before the wind; but expect rough seas, flaws, and contrary blasts; and it is well if by many cross tacks and veerings thou arrivest at thy port. Sit not down in the popular seats and common level of virtues, but endeavour to make them heroical. Offer not only peace-offerings but holocausts unto God. To serve him singly to serve ourselves, were too partial a piece of piety, nor likely to place us in the highest mansions of glory.

* Through the Pacific Ocean, with a constant gale from the east.

He that is chaste and continent, not to impair his strength, or terrified by contagion, will hardly be heroically virtuous. Adjourn not that virtue unto those years when Cato could lend out his wife, and impotent Satyrs write satires against lust; but be chaste in thy flaming days, when Alexander dared not trust his eyes upon the fair daughters of Darius, and when so many men think there is no other way but Origen's.

Be charitable before wealth makes thee covetous, and lose not the glory of the mite. If riches increase, let thy mind hold pace with them; and think it not enough to be liberal, but munificent. Though a cup of cold water from some hand may not be without its reward, yet stick not thou for wine and oil for the wounds of the distressed; and treat the poor as our Saviour did the multitude, to the relics of some baskets.

Trust not to the omnipotency of gold, or say unto it, Thou art my confidence; kiss not thy hand when thou beholdest that terrestrial sun, nor bore thy ear unto its servitude. A slave unto Mammon makes no servant unto God. Covetousness cracks the sinews of faith, numbs the apprehension of any thing above sense, and, only affected with the certainty of things present, makes a peradventure of things to

come; lives but unto one world, nor hopes but fears another; makes our own death sweet unto others, bitter unto ourselves; gives a dry funeral, scenical mourning, and no wet eyes at the grave.

If avarice be thy vice, yet make it not thy punishment; miserable men commiserate not themselves, bowelless unto themselves and merciless unto their own bowels. Let the fruition of things bless the possession of them, and take no satisfaction in dying but living rich. For since thy good works, not thy goods, will follow thee; since riches are an appurtenance of life, and no dead man is rich; to famish in plenty, and live poorly to die rich, were a multiplying improvement in madness, and use upon use in folly.

Persons lightly dipped, not grained in generous honesty, are but pale in goodness, and faint-hued in sincerity; but be thou what thou virtuously art, and let not the ocean wash away thy tincture; stand magnetically upon that axis where prudent simplicity hath fixed thee, and let no temptation invert the poles of thy honesty; and that vice may be uneasy and even monstrous unto thee, let iterated good acts and long-confirmed habits make virtue natural or a second nature in thee. And since few or none prove eminently virtuous but from

some advantageous foundations in their temper and natural inclinations, study thyself betimes, and early find what nature bids thee to be, or tells thee what thou mayest be. They who thus timely descend into themselves, cultivating the good seeds which nature hath set in them, and improving their prevalent inclinations to perfection, become not shrubs, but cedars in their generation; and to be in the form of the best of the bad, or the worst of the good, will be no satisfaction unto them.

Let not the law of thy country be the "non ultra" of thy honesty, nor think that always good enough which the law will make good. Narrow not the law of charity, equity, mercy; join gospel righteousness with legal right; be not a mere Gamaliel in the faith, but let the Sermon in the Mount be thy Targum unto the law of Sinai.

Make not the consequences of virtue the ends thereof; be not beneficent for a name or cymbal of applause, nor exact and punctual in commerce for the advantages of trust and credit which attend the reputation of just and true dealing; for such rewards, though unsought for, plain virtue will bring with her, whom all men honor, though they pursue not. To have other bye ends in good actions sours laudable performances, which must have deeper roots,

motions, and instigations, to give them the stamp of virtues.

Though human infirmity may betray thy heedless days into the popular ways of extravagancy, yet let not thine own depravity, or the torrent of vicious times, carry thee into desperate enormities in opinions, manners, or actions. If thou hast dipped thy foot in the river, yet venture not over Rubicon; run not into extremities from whence there is no regression, nor be ever so closely shut up within the holds of vice and iniquity, as not to find some escape by a postern of resipiscency.

Owe not thy humility unto humiliation by adversity, but look humbly down in that state when others look upward upon thee. Be patient in the age of pride and days of will and impatiency, when men live but by intervals of reason, under the sovereignty of humor and passion, when it is in the power of every one to transform thee out of thyself, and put thee into the short madness. If you cannot imitate Job, yet come not short of Socrates and those patient Pagans, who tired the tongues of their enemies while they perceived they spat their malice at brazen walls and statues.

Let age, not envy, draw wrinkles on thy cheeks; be content to be envied, but envy not. Emulation may be plausible, and indignation

allowable; but admit no treaty with that passion, which no circumstance can make good. A displacency at the good of others, because they enjoy it, although we do not want it, is an absurd depravity, sticking fast unto human nature from its primitive corruption; which he that can well subdue were a Christian of the first magnitude, and, for aught I know, may have one foot already in heaven.

While thou so hotly disclaimest the devil, be not guilty of diabolism; fall not into one name with that unclean spirit, nor act his nature whom thou so much abhorrest; that is, to accuse, calumniate, backbite, whisper, detract, or sinistrously interpret others; degenerous depravities and narrow-minded vices, not only below St. Paul's noble Christian, but Aristotle's * true gentleman. Trust not with some, that the Epistle of St. James is apocryphal, and so read with less fear that stabbing truth, that in company with this vice thy religion is in vain. Moses broke the tables without breaking of the law; but where charity is broke, the law itself is shattered, which cannot be whole without love, that is the fulfilling of it. Look humbly upon thy virtues, and though thou art rich in some, yet think thyself poor and naked without

* See Arist. Ethics. Chapter of Magnanimity.

that crowning grace, which thinketh no evil, which envieth not, which beareth, believeth, hopeth, endureth all things. With these sure graces, while busy tongues are crying out for a drop of cold water, mutes may be in happiness, and sing the Trisagium * in heaven.

Let not the sun in Capricorn † go down upon thy wrath, but write thy wrongs in water; draw the curtain of night upon injuries; shut them up in the tower of oblivion, ‡ and let them be as though they had not been. Forgive thine enemies totally, and without any reserve of hope that, however, God will revenge thee.

Be substantially great in thyself, and more than thou appearest unto others; and let the world be deceived in thee, as they are in the lights of heaven. Hang early plummets upon the heels of pride, and let ambition have but an epicycle or narrow circuit in thee. Measure not thyself by thy morning shadow, but by the extent of thy grave; and reckon thyself above

* Holy, holy, holy.

† Even when the days are shortest.

‡ Alluding to the Tower of Oblivion mentioned by Procopius, which was the name of a tower of imprisonment among the Persians. Whoever was put therein, he was, as it were, buried alive, and it was death for any but to name it.

the earth by the line thou must be contented with under it. Spread not into boundless expansions either to designs or desires. Think not that mankind liveth but for a few, and that the rest are born but to serve the ambition of those who make but flies of men and wildernesses of whole nations. Swell not into actions which embroil and confound the earth; but be one of those violent ones which force the kingdom of heaven. If thou must needs reign, be Zeno's king, and enjoy that empire which every man gives himself. Certainly the iterated injunctions of Christ unto humility, meekness, patience, and that despised train of virtues, cannot but make pathetical impressions upon those who have well considered the affairs of all ages, wherein pride, ambition, and vain-glory, have led up the worst of actions, and whereunto confusion, tragedies, and acts denying all religion, do owe their originals.

Rest not in an ovation, but a triumph over thy passions; chain up the unruly legion of thy breast; behold thy trophies within thee, not without thee; lead thine own captivity captive, and be Cæsar unto thyself.

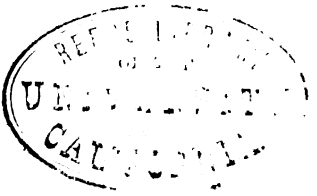
Give no quarter unto those vices which are of thine inward family, and having a root in thy temper, plead a right and property in thee. Examine well thy complexional inclinations.

Raise early batteries against those strong-holds built upon the rock of nature, and make this a great part of the militia of thy life. The politic nature of vice must be opposed by policy, and therefore wiser honesties project and plot against sin; wherein, notwithstanding, we are not to rest in generals, or the trite stratagems of art. That may succeed with one temper which may prove successless with another. There is no community or commonwealth of virtue; every man must study his own economy, and erect those rules unto the figure of himself.

Lastly, if length of days be thy portion, make it not thy expectation. Reckon not upon long life, but live always beyond thy account. He that so often surviveth his expectation, lives many lives, and will hardly complain of the shortness of his days. Time past is gone like a shadow; make times to come present; conceive that near which may be far off; approximate thy last times by present apprehensions of them; live like a neighbour unto death, and think there is but little to come. And since there is something in us that must still live on, join both lives together; unite them in thy thoughts and actions, and live in one but for the other. He who thus ordereth the purposes of this life, will never be far from the next, and is in some manner already in it, by a happy conformity and close apprehension of it.

VULGAR ERRORS.

[The following passages are selected as specimens from different parts of the "Enquiries into Vulgar and Common Errors."]



VULGAR ERRORS.

ADAM'S ERROR.

ADAM, upon the expostulation of God, replied, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and because I was naked I hid myself." In which reply there was included a very gross mistake, and if with pertinacity maintained, a high and capital error. For thinking by this retirement to obscure himself from God, he infringed the omnisciency and essential ubiquity of his Maker; who, as he created all things, so is he beyond and in them all, not only in power, as under his subjection, or in his presence, as being in his cognition, but in his very essence, as being the soul of their causalities and the essential cause of their existences. Certainly his posterity, at this distance and after so perpetuated an impairment, cannot but condemn the poverty of his conception, that thought to obscure himself from his Creator in the shade

of the garden, who had beheld him before in the darkness of his chaos and the great obscurity of nothing; that thought to fly from God which could not fly himself; or imagined that one tree should conceal his nakedness from God's eye, as another had revealed it unto his own. Those tormented spirits, that wish the mountains to cover them, have fallen upon desires of minor absurdity, and chosen ways of less improbable concealment. Though this be also as ridiculous unto reason as fruitless unto their desires; for he that laid the foundations of the earth cannot be excluded the secrecy of the mountains; nor can there any thing escape the perspicacity of those eyes which were before light, and in whose optics there is no opacity. This is the consolation of all good men, unto whom his ubiquity affordeth continual comfort and security; and this is the affliction of hell, unto whom it affordeth despair and remediless calamity. For those restless spirits that fly the face of the Almighty, being deprived of the fruition of his eye, would also avoid the extent of his hand; which being impossible, their sufferings are desperate and their afflictions without evasion, until they can get out of Trismegistus's circle, that is, to extend their wings above the universe and pitch beyond ubiquity.

OF ADHERENCE UNTO ANTIQUITY.

But the mortalest enemy unto knowledge, and that which hath done the greatest execution upon truth, hath been a peremptory adhesion unto authority, and more especially the establishing of our belief upon the dictates of antiquity. For (as every capacity may observe) most men of ages present so superstitiously do look on ages past, that the authorities of the one exceed the reasons of the other; whose persons indeed, being far removed from our times, their works, which seldom with us pass uncontrolled either by contemporaries or immediate successors, are now become out of the distance of envies; and the farther removed from present times, are conceived to approach the nearer unto truth itself. Now hereby methinks we manifestly delude ourselves, and widely walk out of the track of truth.

For, first, men hereby impose a thraldom on their times, which the ingenuity of no age should endure, or indeed the presumption of any did ever yet enjoin. Thus Hippocrates, about two thousand years ago, conceived it no injustice either to examine or refute the doctrines of his predecessors; Galen the like, and

Aristotle most of any. Yet did not any of these conceive themselves infallible, or set down their dictates as verities irrefragable; but when they either deliver their own inventions or reject other men's opinions, they proceed with judgment and ingenuity, establishing their assertions, not only with great solidity, but submitting them also unto the correction of future discovery.

Secondly, men that adore times past, consider not that those times were once present; that is, as our own are at this instant, and we ourselves unto those to come as they unto us at present. As we rely on them, even so will those on us, and magnify us hereafter, who at present condemn ourselves; which very absurdity is daily committed amongst us even in the esteem and censure of our own times. And, to speak impartially, old men, from whom we should expect the greatest example of wisdom, do most exceed in this point of folly; commending the days of their youth they scarce remember, at least well understood not; extolling those times their younger years have heard their fathers condemn, and condemning those times the gray heads of their posterity shall commend. And thus is it the humor of many heads to extol the days of their forefathers and declaim against the wickedness of times pres-

ent; which notwithstanding they cannot handsomely do, without the borrowed help and satires of times past, condemning the vices of their times by the expressions of vices in times which they commend, which cannot but argue the community of vice in both. Horace, therefore, Juvenal, and Persius were no prophets, although their lines did seem to indigitate and point at our times. There is a certain list of vices committed in all ages and declaimed against by all authors, which will last as long as human nature; or digested into common-places may serve for any theme, and never be out of date until doomsday.

THE ERRONEOUS DISPOSITION OF THE PEOPLE.

As for popular errors, they are more nearly founded upon an erroneous inclination of the people, as being the most deceptible part of mankind, and ready with open arms to receive the encroachments of error; which condition of theirs, although deducible from many grounds, yet shall we evidence it but from a few, and such as most nearly and undeniably declare their natures.

How unequal discerners of truth they are, and openly exposed unto error, will first appear from their unqualified intellectuals, unable to umpire the difficulty of its dissensions. For error, to speak largely, is a false judgment of things, or an assent unto falsity. Now whether the object whereunto they deliver up their assent be true or false, they are incompetent judges.

For the assured truth of things is derived from the principles of knowledge, and causes which determine their verities; whereof their uncultivated understandings scarce holding any theory, they are but bad discerners of verity, and in the numerous track of error but casually do hit the point and unity of truth.

Their understanding is so feeble in the discernment of falsities and averting the errors of reason, that it submitteth unto the fallacies of sense, and is unable to rectify the error of its sensations. Thus the greater part of mankind, having but one eye of sense and reason, conceive the earth far bigger than the sun, the fixed stars lesser than the moon, their figures plain, and their spaces from earth equidistant. For thus their sense informeth them, and herein their reason cannot rectify them; and therefore hopelessly continuing in mistakes, they live and die in their absurdities, passing their days

in perverted apprehensions and conceptions of the world, derogatory unto God and the wisdom of the creation.

Again, being so illiterate in the point of intellect and their sense so incorrected, they are farther indisposed ever to attain unto truth, as commonly proceeding in those ways which have most reference unto sense, and wherein there lieth most notable and popular delusion. For being unable to wield the intellectual arms of reason, they are fain to betake themselves unto wasters and the blunter weapons of truth, affecting the gross and sensible ways of doctrine, and such as will not consist with strict and subtile reason. Thus unto them a piece of rhetoric is a sufficient argument of logic, an apologue of Æsop beyond a syllogism in Barbara; parables than propositions, and proverbs more powerful than demonstrations. And therefore are they led rather by example than precept, receiving persuasions from visible inducements before intellectual instructions. And therefore also they judge of human actions by the event; for being uncapable of operable circumstances or rightly to judge the prudentiality of affairs, they only gaze upon the visible success, and thereafter condemn or cry up the whole progression. And so from this ground in the lecture of Holy Scripture, their appre-

hensions are commonly confined unto the literal sense of the text; from whence have ensued the gross and duller sort of heresies. For not attaining the deuteroscopy and second intention of the words, they are fain to omit their superconsequences, coherencies, figures, or tropologies, and are not sometimes persuaded by fire beyond their literalities. And therefore all things invisible but unto intellectual discernments, to humor the grossness of their comprehensions, have been degraded from their proper forms, and God himself dishonored into manual expressions. And so likewise, being unprovided or unsufficient for higher speculations, they will always betake themselves unto sensible representations, and can hardly be restrained the dulness of idolatry; a sin or folly not only derogatory unto God, but men; overthrowing their reason as well as his divinity; in brief, a reciprocation, or rather an inversion of the creation, making God one way, as he made us another; that is, after our image, as he made us after his own.

Moreover, their understanding, thus weak in itself, and perverted by sensible delusions, is yet farther impaired by the dominion of their appetite, that is, the irrational and brutal part of the soul; which, lording it over the sovereign faculty, interrupts the actions of that noble

part, and chokes those tender sparks which Adam hath left them of reason; and therefore they do not only swarm with errors, but vices depending thereon. Thus they commonly affect no man any farther than he deserts his reason or complies with their aberrancies. Hence they embrace not virtue for itself, but its reward; and the argument from pleasure or utility is far more powerful than that from virtuous honesty; which Mahomet and his contrivers well understood, when he set out the felicity of his heaven by the contentments of flesh and the delights of sense, slightly passing over the accomplishment of the soul and the beatitude of that part which earth and visibilities too weakly affect. But the wisdom of our Saviour and the simplicity of his truth proceeded another way, defying the popular provisions of happiness from sensible expectations, placing his felicity in things removed from sense, and the intellectual enjoyment of God. And therefore the doctrine of the one was never afraid of universities, or endeavoured the banishment of learning like the other. And though Galen doth sometimes nibble at Moses, and beside the Apostate Christian, some heathens have questioned his philosophical part or treatise of the creation; yet is there surely no reasonable Pagan that will not admire the rational and

well-grounded precepts of Christ, whose life, as it was conformable unto his doctrine, so was that unto the highest rules of reason, and must therefore flourish in the advancement of learning, and the perfection of parts best able to comprehend it.

Again, their individual imperfections being great, they are moreover enlarged by their aggregation; and being erroneous in their single numbers, once huddled together they will be error itself. For being a confusion of knaves and fools and a farraginous concurrence of all conditions, tempers, sexes, and ages, it is but natural if their determinations be monstrous and many ways inconsistent with truth. And therefore wise men have always applauded their own judgment in the contradiction of that of the people; and their soberest adversaries have ever afforded them the style of fools and madmen; and to speak impartially, their actions have often made good these epithets. Had Orestes been judge, he would not have acquitted that Lystrian rabble of madness, who, upon a visible miracle, falling into so high a conceit of Paul and Barnabas, that they termed the one Jupiter, the other Mercurius; that they brought oxen and garlands, and were hardly restrained from sacrificing unto them; did notwithstanding suddenly after fall upon Paul, and

having stoned him, drew him for dead out of the city. It might have hazarded the sides of Democritus had he been present at that tumult of Demetrius, when, the people flocking together in great numbers, some cried one thing and some another, and the assembly was confused, and the most part knew not wherefore they were come together; notwithstanding, all with one voice for the space of two hours cried out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." It had overcome the patience of Job, as it did the meekness of Moses, and would surely have mastered any but the longanimity and lasting sufferance of God, had they beheld the mutiny in the wilderness, when, after ten great miracles in Egypt and some in the same place, they melted down their stolen ear-rings into a calf, and monstrously cried out, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." It much accuseth the impatience of Peter, who could not endure the staves of the multitude, and is the greatest example of lenity in our Saviour, when he desired of God forgiveness unto those, who having one day brought him into the city in triumph, did presently after act all dishonor upon him, and nothing could be heard but "Crucifige" in their courts. Certainly he that considereth these things in God's peculiar people will easi-

ly discern how little of truth there is in the ways of the multitude; and though sometimes they are flattered with that aphorism, will hardly believe the voice of the people to be the voice of God.

Lastly, being thus divided from truth in themselves, they are yet farther removed by advenient deception. For true it is, (and I hope I shall not offend their vulgarities if I say,) they are daily mocked into error by subtler devisors, and have been expressly deluded by all professions and ages. Thus the priests of elder time have put upon them many incredible conceits, not only deluding their apprehensions with ariolation, soothsaying, and such oblique idolatries, but winning their credulities unto the literal and downright adorement of cats, lizards, and beetles. And thus also in some Christian churches, wherein is presumed an irreprovable truth, if all be true that is suspected, or half what is related, there have not wanted many strange deceptions, and some thereof are still confessed by the name of pious frauds. Thus Theudas, an impostor, was able to lead away four thousand into the wilderness, and the delusions of Mahomet almost the fourth part of mankind. Thus all heresies, how gross soever, have found a welcome with the people. For thus many of the Jews were wrought into

the belief that Herod was the Messias; and David George of Leyden, and Arden, were not without a party amongst the people, who maintained the same opinion of themselves almost in our days.

Saltinbancoes, quacksalvers, and charlatans deceive them in lower degrees. Were Æsop alive, the Piazza and Pont-Neuf could not but speak their fallacies; meanwhile there are too many, whose cries cannot conceal their mischief. For their impostures are full of cruelty and worse than any other, deluding not only unto pecuniary defraudations, but the irreparable deceit of death.

Astrologers, which pretend to be of Cabala with the stars, (such I mean as abuse that worthy inquiry,) have not been wanting in their deceptions; who, having won their belief unto principles whereof they make great doubt themselves, have made them believe that arbitrary events below have necessary causes above; whereupon their credulities assent unto any prognostics, and daily swallow the predictions of men, which, considering the independency of their causes and contingency in their events, are only in the prescience of God.

Fortunetellers, jugglers, geomancers, and the like incantatory impostors, though commonly men of inferior rank, and from whom without

illumination they can expect no more than from themselves, do daily and professedly delude them; unto whom (what is deplorable in men and Christians) too many applying themselves, betwixt jest and earnest, betray the cause of truth, and insensibly make up the legionary body of error.

Statists and politicians, unto whom "ragione di stato" is the first considerable, as though it were their business to deceive the people, as a maxim do hold that truth is to be concealed from them; unto whom although they reveal the visible design, yet do they commonly conceal the capital intention. And therefore have they ever been the instruments of great designs, yet seldom understood the true intention of any; accomplishing the drifts of wiser heads, as inanimate and ignorant agents the general design of the world; who though in some latitude of sense and in a natural cognition perform their proper actions, yet do they unknowingly concur unto higher ends and blindly advance the great intention of nature. Now how far they may be kept in ignorance, a great example there is in the people of Rome, who never knew the true and proper name of their own city. For beside that common appellation received by the citizens, it had a proper and secret name concealed from them.

"Cujus alterum nomen dicere secretis ceremoniarum nefas habetur," says Pliny; lest the name thereof being discovered unto their enemies, their penates and patronal gods might be called forth by charms and incantations. For according unto the tradition of magicians, the tutelary spirits will not remove at common appellations, but at the proper names of things whereunto they are protectors.

Thus having been deceived by themselves, and continually deluded by others, they must needs be stuffed with errors, and even over-run with these inferior falsities; whereunto whosoever shall resign their reasons, either from the root of deceit in themselves, or inability to resist such trivial ingannations from others, although their condition and fortunes may place them many spheres above the multitude, yet are they still within the line of vulgarity, and democratical enemies of truth.

OF THE FALLING OF SALT.

THE falling of salt is an authentic presagement of ill luck, nor can every temper contemn it; from whence notwithstanding nothing can be naturally feared; nor was the same a gene-

ral prognostic of future evil among the ancients, but a particular omination concerning the breach of friendship. For salt, as incorruptible, was the symbol of friendship, and, before the other service, was offered unto their guests; which, if it casually fell, was accounted ominous, and their amity of no duration. But whether salt were not only a symbol of friendship with man, but also a figure of amity and reconciliation with God, and was therefore observed in sacrifices, is a higher speculation.

OF BREAKING THE EGG-SHELL.

To break the egg-shell after the meat is out, we are taught in our childhood, and practise it all our lives; which nevertheless is but a superstitious relic, according to the judgment of Pliny, "Huc pertinet ovorum, ut exsorbuerit quisque, calices protinus frangi, aut eosdem cochlearibus perforari;" and the intent hereof was to prevent withcraft; for lest witches should draw or prick their names therein, and veneficiously mischief their persons, they broke the shell, as Dalecampius hath observed.

OF THE TRUE LOVER'S KNOT.

THE true lover's knot is very much magnified, and still retained in presents of love among us; which, though in all points it doth not make out, had perhaps its original from "Nodus Herculanus," or that which was called Hercules's knot, resembling the snaky complication in the caduceus or rod of Hermes; and in which form the zone or woollen girdle of the bride was fastened, as Turnebus observeth in his "Adversaria."

OF THE CHEEK BURNING OR EAR TINGLING.

WHEN our cheek burneth or ear tingleth, we usually say that somebody is talking of us, which is an ancient conceit, and ranked among superstitious opinions by Pliny. "Absentes tinnitu aurium præsentire sermones de se receptum est," according to that distich noted by Dalecampius.

"Garrula, quid totis resonas mihi noctibus, auris?
Nescio quem dicis nunc meminisse mei."

Which is a conceit hardly to be made out without the concession of a signifying Genius, or

universal Mercury, conducting sounds unto their distant subjects, and teaching us to hear by touch.

OF SPEAKING UNDER THE ROSE.

When we desire to confine our words, we commonly say they are spoken under the rose; which expression is commendable, if the rose, from any natural property, may be the symbol of silence, as Nazianzen seems to imply in these translated verses;

> "Utque latet rosa verna suo putamine clausa,
> Sic os vincla ferat, validisque arctetur habenis,
> Indicatque suis prolixa silentia labris."

And is also tolerable, if by desiring a secrecy to words spoke under the rose, we only mean in society and compotation, from the ancient custom in symposiac meetings to wear chaplets of roses about their heads; and so we condemn not the German custom, which over the table describeth a rose in the ceiling. But more considerable it is, if the original were such as Lemnius and others have recorded, that the rose was the flower of Venus, which Cupid consecrated unto Harpocrates, the god of silence, and was therefore an emblem thereof,

to conceal the pranks of venery; as is declared in this tetrastich:

" Est rosa flos Veneris, cujus quo facta laterent,
Harpocrati matris, dona dicavit Amor;
Inde rosam mensis hospes suspendit amicis,
Convivæ ut sub eâ dicta tacenda sciant."

OF SMOKE FOLLOWING THE FAIR.

THAT smoke doth follow the fairest, is a usual saying with us and in many parts of Europe; whereof although there seem no natural ground, yet is it the continuation of a very ancient opinion, as Petrus Victorius and Casaubon have observed from a passage in Athenæus; wherein a parasite thus describeth himself:

" To every table first I come,
Whence Porridge I am called by some;
A Capaneus at stairs I am,
To enter any room a ram;
Like whips and thongs to all I ply,
Like smoke unto the fair I fly."

OF SITTING CROSS-LEGGED.

To sit cross-legged, or with our fingers pectinated or shut together, is accounted bad, and friends will persuade us from it. The same conceit religiously possessed the ancients, as is observable from Pliny, — "Poplites alternis genibus imponere nefas olim"; and also from Athenæus, that it was an old veneficious practice, and Juno is made in this posture to hinder the delivery of Alcmæna. And therefore, as Pierius observeth, in the medal of Julia Pia, the right hand of Venus was made extended, with the inscription of Venus Genetrix; for the complication or pectination of the fingers was a hieroglyphic of impediment, as in that place he declareth.

OF THE PARING OF NAILS.

The set and statary time of paring of nails and cutting of hair is thought by many a point of consideration; which is perhaps but the continuation of an ancient superstition. For piaculous it was unto the Romans to pare their nails upon the Nundinæ, observed every ninth day; and was also feared by others in certain days of the week, according to that of Auso-

nius, "Ungues Mercurio, barbam Jove, Cypride crines," and was one part of the wickedness that filled up the measure of Manasses, when 't is delivered that "he observed times." *

OF HAIR UPON MOLES.

A COMMON fashion it is to nourish hair upon the moles of the face; which is the perpetuation of a very ancient custom, and though innocently practised among us, may have a superstitious original, according to that of Pliny, "Nævos in facie tondere religiosum habent nunc multi." From the like might proceed the fears of polling elvelocks, or complicated hairs of the head, and also of locks longer than the other hair; they being votary at first, and dedicated upon occasion, preserved with great care, and accordingly esteemed by others, as appears by that of Apuleius, "Adjuro per dulcem capilli tui nodulum."

OF LIONS' HEADS UPON SPOUTS.

A CUSTOM there is in most parts of Europe to adorn aqueducts, spouts, and cisterns with li-

* 2 Chronicles, xxxiii. 6.

ons' heads; which though no illaudable ornament, is of an Egyptian genealogy, who practised the same under a symbolical illation. For because, the sun being in Leo, the flood of Nilus was at the full, and water became conveyed into every part, they made the spouts of their aqueducts through the head of a lion. And upon some celestial respects it is not improbable the great Mogul or Indian king doth bear for his arms a lion and the sun.

OF THE PICTURE OF GOD.

The picture of the Creator, or God the Father, in the shape of an old man, is a dangerous piece, and in this fecundity of sects may revive the Anthropomorphites; which, although maintained from the expression of Daniel, "I beheld where the Ancient of days did sit, whose hair of his head was like the pure wool," yet may it be also derivative from the hieroglyphical description of the Egyptians, who, to express their Eneph, or Creator of the world, described an old man in a blue mantle, with an egg in his mouth, which was the emblem of the world. Surely those heathens, that, notwithstanding the exemplary advantage in heaven, would endure no pictures of sun or moon, as being visible unto all the world, and needing

no representation, do evidently accuse the practice of those pencils that will describe invisibles. And he that challenged the boldest hand unto the picture of an echo, must laugh at this attempt, not only in the description of invisibility, but circumscription of ubiquity, and fetching under lines incomprehensible circularity.

The pictures of the Egyptians were more tolerable, and in their sacred letters more veniably expressed the apprehension of Divinity. For though they implied the same by an eye upon a sceptre, by an eagle's head, a crocodile, and the like, yet did these manual descriptions pretend no corporal representations; nor could the people misconceive the same unto real correspondencies. So though the Cherub carried some apprehension of Divinity, yet was it not conceived to be the shape thereof; and so perhaps, because it is metaphorically predicated of God that he is a consuming fire, he may be harmlessly described by a flaming representation. Yet if, as some will have it, all mediocrity of folly is foolish, and because an unrequitable evil may ensue, an indifferent convenience must be omitted, we shall not urge such representments; we could spare the holy lamb for the picture of our Saviour, and the dove or fiery tongues to represent the Holy Ghost.

OF THE SUN, MOON, AND WINDS.

THE sun and moon are usually described with human faces. Whether herein there be not a Pagan imitation, and those visages at first implied Apollo and Diana, we may make some doubt; and we find the statue of the sun was framed with rays about the head, which were the indeciduous and unshaven locks of Apollo. We should be too iconomachal * to question the pictures of the winds, as commonly drawn in human heads, and with their cheeks distended; which notwithstanding we find condemned by Minucius, as answering poetical fancies, and the gentile description of Æolus, Boreas, and the feigned deities of the winds.

OF THE SUN DANCING.

WE shall not, I hope, disparage the resurrection of our Redeemer, if we say the sun doth not dance on Easter day. And though we would willingly assent unto any sympathetical exultation, yet cannot conceive therein any more than a tropical expression. Whether any such motion there were in that day wherein Christ arose, Scripture hath not revealed, which

* Quarrelsome with pictures.

hath been punctual in other records concerning solary miracles; and the Areopagite that was amazed at the eclipse, took no notice of this. And if metaphorical expressions go so far, we may be bold to affirm, not only that one sun danced, but two arose that day; that light appeared at his nativity, and darkness at his death, and yet a light at both; for even that darkness was a light unto the Gentiles, illuminated by that obscurity; that 't was the first time the sun set above the horizon; that although there were darkness above the earth, there was light beneath it; nor dare we say that hell was dark if he were in it.

OF THE DEVIL.

A CONCEIT there is, that the devil commonly appeareth with a cloven hoof; wherein although it seem excessively ridiculous, there may be somewhat of truth; and the ground thereof at first might be his frequent appearing in the shape of a goat, which answers that description. This was the opinion of ancient Christians concerning the apparition of Panites, Fauns, and Satyrs; and in this form we read of one that appeared unto Antony in the wil-

derness. The same is also confirmed from expositions of Holy Scripture; for whereas it is said, "Thou shalt not offer unto devils," the original word is "seghnirim," that is, rough and hairy goats, because in that shape the devil most often appeared; as is expounded by the rabbins, as Tremellius hath also explained, and as the word Ascimah, the god of Emath, is by some conceived. Nor did he only assume this shape in elder times, but commonly in later days, especially in the place of his worship, if there be any truth in the confession of witches, and as in many stories it stands confirmed by Bodinus. And therefore a goat is not improperly made the hieroglyphic of the devil, as Pierius hath expressed it. So might it be the emblem of sin, as it was in the sin-offering; and so likewise of wicked and sinful men, according to the expression of Scripture in the method of the last distribution, when our Saviour shall separate the sheep from the goats, that is, the sons of the Lamb from the children of the devil.

OF SPOTS ON THE NAILS.

That temperamental dignotions and conjecture of prevalent humors may be collected from

spots in our nails, we are not averse to concede, but yet not ready to admit sundry divinations vulgarly raised upon them. Nor do we observe it verified in others, what Cardan discovered as a property in himself, to have found therein some signs of most events that ever happened unto him; or that there is much considerable in that doctrine of chiromancy, that spots in the top of the nails do signify things past, in the middle, things present, and at the bottom, events to come; that white specks presage our felicity, blue ones our misfortunes; that those in the nail of the thumb have significations of honor, those in the forefinger of riches, and so respectively in other fingers, (according to planetical relations, from whence they receive their names,) as Tricassus hath taken up, and Picciolus well rejecteth.

We shall not proceed to query, what truth there is in palmistry, or divination from those lines in our hands of high denomination. Although if any thing be therein, it seems not confinable unto man; but other creatures are also considerable; as is the forefoot of the mole, and especially of the monkey; wherein we have observed the table line, that of life, and of the liver.

OF LIGHTS BURNING BLUE.

That candles and lights burn dim and blue at the apparition of spirits, may be true, if the ambient air be full of sulphurous spirits, as it happeneth oft times in mines, where damps and acid exhalations are able to extinguish them; and may be also verified, when spirits do make themselves visible by bodies of such effluviums. But of lower consideration is the common foretelling of strangers, from the fungus parcels about the wicks of candles; which only signifieth a moist and pluvious air about them, hindering the avolation of the light and favillous particles; whereupon they are forced to settle upon the snast.

OF THE WEARING OF CORAL.

Though coral doth properly preserve and fasten the teeth in men, yet is it used in children to make an easier passage for them, and for that intent is worn about their necks. But whether this custom were not superstitiously founded, as presumed an amulet or defensative against fascination, is not beyond all doubt. For the same is delivered by Pliny. "Aruspices religiosum coralli gestamen amoliendis

periculis arbitrantur; et surculi infantiæ adalligati, tutelam habere creduntur."

OF THE DIVINING ROD.

A STRANGE kind of exploration and peculiar way of rhabdomancy is that which is used in mineral discoveries, that is, with a forked hazel, commonly called Moses's rod, which, freely held forth, will stir and play if any mine be under it. And though many there are who have attempted to make it good, yet, until better information, we are of opinion with Agricola, that in itself it is a fruitless exploration, strongly scenting of Pagan derivation and the "virgula divina," proverbially magnified of old. The ground whereof were the magical rods in poets, that of Pallas in Homer, that of Mercury that charmed Argus, and that of Circe which transformed the followers of Ulysses; too boldly usurping the name of Moses's rod, from which notwithstanding, and that of Aaron, were probably occasioned the fables of all the rest. For that of Moses must needs be famous unto the Egyptians, and that of Aaron unto many other nations, as being preserved in the ark until the destruction of the temple built by Solomon.

OF DISCOVERING MATTERS BY BOOK OR STAFF.

A PRACTICE there is among us to determine doubtful matters, by the opening of a book, and letting fall a staff; which notwithstanding are ancient fragments of Pagan divinations. The first an imitation of "Sortes Homericæ" or "Virgilianæ," drawing determinations from verses casually occurring. The same was practised by Severus, who entertained ominous hopes of the empire, from that verse in Virgil, "Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento"; and Gordianus, who reigned but few days, was discouraged by another, that is, "Ostendent terris hunc tantum fata, nec ultra Esse sinunt." Nor was this only performed in heathen authors, but upon the sacred texts of Scripture, as Gregorius Turonensis hath left some account, and as the practice of the emperor Heraclius, before his expedition into Asia Minor, is delivered by Cedrenus.

As for the divination or decision from the staff, it is an augurial relic, and the practice thereof is accused by God himself. "My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them." * Of this kind of rhabdo-

* Hosea, iv. 12.

mancy was that practised by Nabuchadonosor in that Chaldean miscellany delivered by Ezekiel, — "The king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of two ways, to use divination; he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver; at his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem." * That is, as Estius expounded it, the left way leading unto Rabbah, the chief city of the Ammonites, and the right unto Jerusalem, he consulted idols and entrails, he threw up a bundle of arrows to see which way they would light; and falling on the right hand, he marched towards Jerusalem. A like way of belomancy, or divination by arrows, hath been in request with Scythians, Alanes, Germans, with the Africans and Turks of Algiers. But of another nature was that which was practised by Elisha, when by an arrow shot from an eastern window, he presignified the destruction of Syria; or when, according unto the three strokes of Joash, with an arrow upon the ground, he foretold the number of his victories. For thereby the spirit of God particulared the same, and determined the strokes of the king unto three, which the hopes of the prophet expected in twice that number.

* Ezekiel, xxi. 21.

We are unwilling to enlarge concerning many other; only referring unto sober examination, what natural effects can reasonably be expected, when to prevent the ephialtes or night-mare we hang up a hollow stone in our stables; when for amulets against agues we use the chips of gallows and places of execution; when for warts we rub our hands before the moon; or commit any maculated part unto the touch of the dead. Swarms hereof our learned Selden and critical philologers might illustrate, whose abler performances our adventures do but solicit. Meanwhile I hope they will plausibly receive our attempts, or candidly correct our misconjectures.

OF AUTHORITY.

We hope it will not be unconsidered, that we find no open tract or constant manuduction in this labyrinth, but are oft-times fain to wander in the America and untravelled parts of truth. We are often constrained to stand alone against the strength of opinion, and to meet the Goliah and giant of authority, with contemptible pebbles and feeble arguments, drawn from the scrip and slender stock of ourselves.

OF GARDENS.

The earth is the garden of nature, and each fruitful country a paradise. The Turks, who pass their days in gardens here, will have gardens also hereafter, and delighting in flowers on earth, must have lilies and roses in heaven. The delightful world comes after death, and paradise succeeds the grave. The verdant state of things is the symbol of the resurrection; and to flourish in the state of glory, we must first be sown in corruption.

OF LIGHT.

Light that makes things seen, makes some things invisible. Were it not for darkness and the shadow of the earth, the noblest part of the creation had remained unseen, and the stars of heaven as invisible as on the fourth day, when they were created above the horizon with the sun, or there was not an eye to behold them. The greatest mystery of religion is expressed by adumbration, and in the noblest part of Jewish types we find the cherubim shadowing the mercy-seat. Life itself is but the shadow of death, and souls departed but the shadows of the living. All things fall under this name.

The sun itself is but the dark "simulacrum," and light but the shadow of God.

OF ORDER.

NIGHT, which Pagan theology could make the daughter of chaos, affords no advantage to the description of order; although no lower than that mass can we derive its genealogy. All things began in order; so shall they end, and so shall they begin again, according to the ordainer of order and mystical mathematics of the city of heaven.

OF SLEEP.

THOUGH Somnus in Homer be sent to rouse up Agamemnon, I find no such effects in these drowsy approaches of sleep. To keep our eyes open longer were but to act our antipodes. The huntsmen are up in America, and they are already past their first sleep in Persia. But who can be drowsy at that hour which freed us from everlasting sleep? or have slumbering thoughts at that time when sleep itself must end, and as some conjecture, all shall awake again?

THE END.

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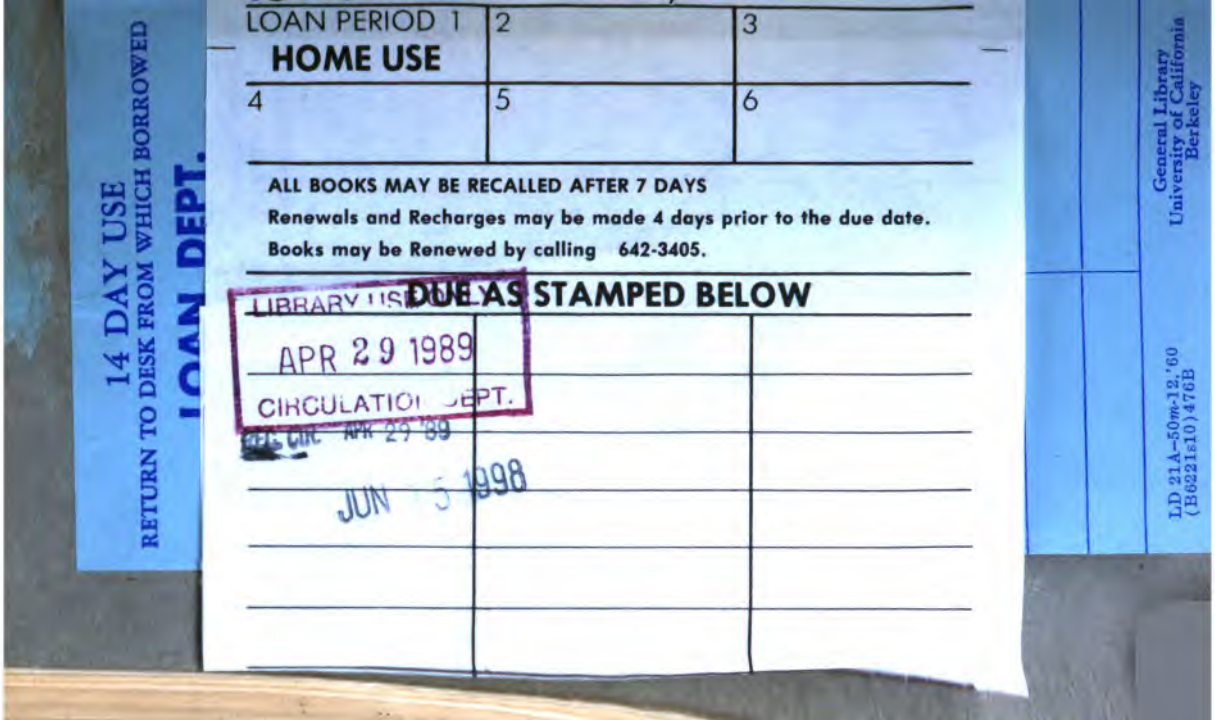
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